



Camel, puma

W. Heathcote, del.

THE GHOSTLY FIGURE IN THE SHROUD.

*A ghostly figure, shrouded in white
drapery, with the semblance of a
bloody turban on its head, entered,
and stalked slowly up the apartment.*

London, Published by Richard Bentley

HEADLONG HALL.

NIGHTMARE ABBEY.

MAID MARIAN.

CROTCHET CASTLE.

WITH CORRECTIONS, AND A PREFACE,
BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
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1837.

P R E F A C E

TO THE

VOLUME OF "STANDARD NOVELS"

CONTAINING

HEADLONG HALL," "NIGHTMARE ABBEY," "MAID
MARIAN," AND "CROTCHET CASTLE."

ALL these little publications appeared originally without prefaces. I left them to speak for themselves; and I thought I might very fitly preserve my own impersonality, having never intruded on the personality of others, nor taken any liberties but with public conduct and public opinions. But an old friend assures me, that to publish a book without a preface is like entering a drawing-room without making a bow. In deference to this opinion, though I am not quite clear of its soundness, I make my prefatory bow at this eleventh hour.

"Headlong Hall" was written in 1815; "Nightmare Abbey," in 1817; "Maid Marian," with the exception of the last three chapters, in 1818; "Crotchet Castle," in

1830. I am desirous to note the intervals, because, at each of those periods, things were true, in great matters and in small, which are true no longer. "Headlong Hall" begins with the Holyhead Mail, and "Crotchet Castle" ends with a rotten borough. The Holyhead mail no longer keeps the same hours, nor stops at the Capel Cerig Inn, which the progress of improvement has thrown out of the road; and the rotten boroughs of 1830 have ceased to exist, though there are some very pretty pocket properties, which are their worthy successors. But the classes of tastes, feelings, and opinions, which were successively brought into play in these little tales, remain substantially the same. Perfectibilians, deteriorationists, statu-quo-ites, phrenologists, transcendentalists, political economists, theorists in all sciences, projectors in all arts, morbid visionaries, romantic enthusiasts, lovers of music, lovers of the picturesque, and lovers of good dinners, march, and will march for ever, *pari passu* with the march of mechanics, which some facetiously call the march of intellect. The fastidious in old wine are a race that does not decay. Literary violators of the confidences of private life still gain a disreputable livelihood and an unenviable notoriety. Match-makers from interest, and the disappointed in love and in friendship, are varieties of which specimens are extant. The great principle of the Right of Might is as flourishing now as in the days of Maid Marian: the array of false pretensions, moral, political, and

literary, is as imposing as ever : the rulers of the world still feel things in their effects, and never foresee them in their causes; and political mountebanks continue, and will continue, to puff' nostrums and practise legerdemain under the eyes of the multitude ; following, like the " learned friend" of Crotchet Castle, a course as tortuous as that of a river, but in a reverse process : beginning by being dark and deep, and ending by being transparent.

THE AUTHOR OF "HEADLONG HALL."

March 4. 1837.

HEADLONG HALL.

[First published in 1816.]

All philosophers, who find
Some favourite system to their mind,
In every point to make it fit,
Will force all nature to submit.

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HEADLONG HALL.

CHAPTER I.

THE MAIL.

THE ambiguous light of a December morning, peeping through the windows of the Holyhead mail, dispelled the soft visions of the four insides, who had slept, or seemed to sleep, through the first seventy miles of the road, with as much comfort as may be supposed consistent with the jolting of the vehicle, and an occasional admonition to *remember the coachman*, thundered through the open door, accompanied by the gentle breath of Boreas, into the ears of the drowsy traveller.

A lively remark, that *the day was none of the finest*, having elicited a repartee of *quite the contrary*, the various knotty points of meteorology, which usually form the exordium of an English conversation, were successively discussed and exhausted; and, the ice being thus broken, the colloquy rambled to other topics, in the course of which it appeared, to the surprise of every one, that all four, though perfect strangers to each other, were actually bound to the same point, namely, Headlong Hall, the seat of the ancient and honourable family of the Headlongs, of the vale of Llanberris, in Caernarvonshire. This name may appear at first sight not to be truly Cambrian, like those of the Rices, and Prices, and Morgans, and Owens, and Williamses, and Evanses, and Parrys, and Joneses; but, nevertheless, the

Headlongs claim to be not less genuine derivatives from the antique branch of Cadwallader than any of the last named multiramified families. They claim, indeed, by one account, superior antiquity to all of them, and even to Cadwallader himself; a tradition having been handed down in Headlong Hall for some few thousand years, that the founder of the family was preserved in the deluge on the summit of Snowdon, and took the name of Rhaiader, which signifies a *waterfall*, in consequence of his having accompanied the water in its descent or diminution, till he found himself comfortably seated on the rocks of Llanberris. But, in later days, when commercial bagsmen began to scour the country, the ambiguity of the sound induced his descendants to drop the suspicious denomination of *Riders*, and translate the word into English; when, not being well pleased with the sound of the *thing*, they substituted that of the *quality*, and accordingly adopted the name *Headlong*, the appropriate epithet of waterfall.

I cannot tell how the truth may be:
I say the tale as 't was said to me.

The present representative of this ancient and dignified house, Harry Headlong, Esquire, was, like all other Welsh squires, fond of shooting, hunting, racing, drinking, and other such innocent amusements, μειζονος δ' αλλου τινος, as Menander expresses it. But, unlike other Welsh squires, he had actually suffered certain phenomena, called books, to find their way into his house; and, by dint of lounging over them after dinner, on those occasions when he was compelled to take his bottle alone, he became seized with a violent passion to be thought a philosopher and a man of taste; and accordingly set off on an expedition to Oxford, to inquire for other varieties of the same genera, namely, men of taste and philosophers; but, being assured by a learned professor that there were no such things in the University, he proceeded to London, where, after beating up in several booksellers' shops, theatres, exhibition-rooms, and other resorts of literature and taste, he formed as extensive an acquaintance with philosophers and dilettanti as his utmost ambition could desire; and it now became his chief wish to have them all together in Headlong Hall, ar-

guing, over his old Port and Burgundy, the various knotty points which had puzzled his pericranium. He had, therefore, sent them invitations in due form to pass their Christmas at Headlong Hall; which invitations the extensive fame of his kitchen fire had induced the greater part of them to accept; and four of the chosen guests had, from different parts of the metropolis, ensconced themselves in the four corners of the Holyhead mail.

These four persons were, Mr. Foster*, the perfectibilian; Mr. Escot†, the deteriorationist; Mr. Jenkison‡, the statu-quo-ite; and the Reverend Doctor Gaster§, who, though of course neither a philosopher nor a man of taste, had so won on the Squire's fancy, by a learned dissertation on the art of stuffing a turkey, that he concluded no Christmas party would be complete without him.

The conversation among these illuminati soon became animated; and Mr. Foster, who, we must observe, was a thin gentleman, about thirty years of age, with an aquiline nose, black eyes, white teeth, and black hair—took occasion to panegyricize the vehicle in which they were then travelling, and observed what remarkable improvements had been made in the means of facilitating intercourse between distant parts of the kingdom: he held forth with great energy on the subject of roads and railways, canals and tunnels, manufactures and machinery: "In short," said he, "every thing we look on attests the progress of mankind in all the arts of life, and demonstrates their gradual advancement towards a state of unlimited perfection."

Mr. Escot, who was somewhat younger than Mr. Foster, but rather more pale and saturnine in his aspect, here took

* Foster, quasi Φωστρος, —from φως and τρετω, lucem servo, conservo, observo, custodio, —one who watches over and guards the light; a sense in which the word is often used amongst us, when we speak of *fostering* a flame.

† Escot, quasi ες σκοτον, in tenebras, scilicet, intuens; one who is always looking into the dark side of the question.

‡ Jenkison: This name may be derived from αὐτὸν ἐξ ἰσων, *semper ex aequalibus* —scilicet, mensuris, omnia metiens: one who from equal measures divides and distributes all things: one who from equal measures can always produce arguments on both sides of a question, with so much nicety and exactness, as to keep the said question eternally pending, and the balance of the controversy perpetually in statu quo. By an apharexis of the α, an elision of the second ε, and an easy and natural mutation of ξ into x, the derivation of this name proceeds according to the strictest principles of etymology: αὐτὸν ἐξ ἰσων — ἰτὶν ἐξ ἰσων — ἰτὶν x ἰσων — ἰτὶν x ἰσων — Jenkison — Jenkison.

§ Gaster: scilicet Γαστήρ — Venter, — et præterea nihil.

up the thread of the discourse, observing, that the proposition just advanced seemed to him perfectly contrary to the true state of the case: "for," said he; "these improvements, as you call them, appear to me only so many links in the great chain of corruption, which will soon fetter the whole human race in irreparable slavery and incurable wretchedness: your improvements proceed in a simple ratio, while the factitious wants and unnatural appetites they engender proceed in a compound one; and thus one generation acquires fifty wants, and fifty means of supplying them are invented, which each in its turn engenders two new ones; so that the next generation has a hundred, the next two hundred, the next four hundred, till every human being becomes such a helpless compound of perverted inclinations, that he is altogether at the mercy of external circumstances, loses all independence and singleness of character, and degenerates so rapidly from the primitive dignity of his sylvan origin, that it is scarcely possible to indulge in any other expectation, than that the whole species must at length be exterminated by its own infinite imbecility and vileness."

"Your opinions," said Mr. Jenkison, a round-faced little gentleman of about forty-five, "seem to differ *toto cælo*. I have often debated the matter in my own mind, *pro* and *con*, and have 'at length arrived at this conclusion,—that there is not in the human race a tendency either to moral perfectibility or deterioration; but that the quantities of each are so exactly balanced by their reciprocal results, that the species, with respect to the sum of good and evil, knowledge and ignorance, happiness and misery, remains exactly and perpetually *in statu quo*."

"Surely," said Mr. Foster, "you cannot maintain such a proposition in the face of evidence so luminous. Look at the progress of all the arts and sciences,—see chemistry, botany, astronomy——."

"Surely," said Mr. Escot, "experience deposes against you. Look at the rapid growth of corruption, luxury, selfishness——."

"Really, gentlemen," said the Reverend Doctor Gaster, after clearing the husk in his throat with two or three hems, "this is a very sceptical, and, I must say, atheistical con-

versation, and I should have thought, out of respect to my cloth —."

Here the coach stopped, and the coachman, opening the door, vociferated — "Breakfast, gentlemen;" a sound which so gladdened the ears of the divine, that the alacrity with which he sprang from the vehicle superinduced a distortion of his ankle, and he was obliged to limp into the inn between Mr. Escot and Mr. Jenkison; the former observing, that he ought to look for nothing but evil, and, therefore, should not be surprised at this little accident; the latter remarking, that the comfort of a good breakfast, and the pain of a sprained ankle, pretty exactly balanced each other.

CHAPTER II.

THE SQUIRE. — THE BREAKFAST.

SQUIRE Headlong, in the mean while, was quadripartite in his locality; that is to say, he was superintending the operations in four scenes of action — namely, the cellar, the library, the picture-gallery, and the dining-room, — preparing for the reception of his philosophical and dilettanti visitors. His myrmidon on this occasion was a little red nosed butler, whom nature seemed to have cast in the genuine mould of an antique Silenus, and who waddled about the house after his master, wiping his forehead and panting for breath, while the latter bounced from room to room like a cracker, and was indefatigable in his requisitions for the proximity of his vinous Achates, whose advice and co-operation he deemed no less necessary in the library than in the cellar. Multitudes of packages had arrived, by land and water, from London, and Liverpool, and Chester, and Manchester, and Birmingham, and various parts of the mountains: books, wine, cheese, globes, mathematical instruments, turkeys, telescopes, hams, tongues, microscopes, quadrants, sextants, fiddles, flutes, tea, sugar, electrical machines, figs, spices, air-pumps, soda-water,

chemical apparatus, eggs, French-horns, drawing books, palettes, oils, and colours, bottled ale and porter, scenery for a private theatre, pickles and fish-sauce, patent lamps and chandeliers, barrels of oysters, sofas, chairs, tables, carpets, beds, looking-glasses, pictures, fruits and confections, nuts, oranges, lemons, packages of salt salmon, and jars of Portugal grapes. These, arriving with infinite rapidity, and in inexhaustible succession, had been deposited at random, as the convenience of the moment dictated, — sofas in the cellar, chandeliers in the kitchen, hampers of ale in the drawing-room, and fiddles and fish-sauce in the library. The servants, unpacking all these in furious haste, and flying with them from place to place, according to the tumultuous directions of Squire Headlong and the little fat butler who fumed at his heels, chafed, and crossed, and clashed, and tumbled over one another up stairs and down. All was bustle, uproar, and confusion; yet nothing seemed to advance: while the rage and impetuosity of the Squire continued fermenting to the highest degree of exasperation, which he signified, from time to time, by converting some newly unpacked article, such as a book, a bottle, a ham, or a fiddle, into a missile against the head of some unfortunate servant who did not seem to move in a ratio of velocity corresponding to the intensity of his master's desires.

In this state of eager preparation we shall leave the happy inhabitants of Headlong Hall, and return to the three philosophers and the unfortunate divine, whom we left limping with a sprained ankle into the breakfast-room of the inn; where his two supporters deposited him safely in a large arm-chair, with his wounded leg comfortably stretched out on another. The morning being extremely cold, he contrived to be seated as near the fire as was consistent with his other object of having a perfect command of the table and its apparatus; which consisted not only of the ordinary comforts of tea and toast, but of a delicious supply of new-laid eggs, and a magnificent round of beef; against which Mr. Escot immediately pointed all the artillery of his eloquence, declaring the use of animal food, conjointly with that of fire, to be one of the principal causes of the present degener-

acy of mankind. "The natural and original man," said he, "lived in the woods: the roots and fruits of the earth supplied his simple nutriment: he had few desires, and no diseases. But, when he began to sacrifice victims on the altar of superstition, to pursue the goat and the deer, and, by the pernicious invention of fire, to pervert their flesh into food, luxury, disease, and premature death, were let loose upon the world. Such is clearly the correct interpretation of the fable of Prometheus, which is a symbolical portraiture of that disastrous epoch, when man first applied fire to culinary purposes, and thereby surrendered his liver to the vulture of disease. From that period the stature of mankind has been in a state of gradual diminution, and I have not the least doubt that it will continue to grow *small by degrees, and lamentably less*, till the whole race will vanish imperceptibly from the face of the earth."

"I cannot agree," said Mr. Foster, "in the consequences being so very disastrous. I admit, that in some respects the use of animal food retards, though it cannot materially inhibit, the perfectibility of the species. But the use of fire was indispensably necessary, as *Æschylus* and *Virgil* expressly assert, to give being to the various arts of life, which, in their rapid and interminable progress, will finally conduct every individual of the race to the philosophic pinnacle of pure and perfect felicity."

"In the controversy concerning animal and vegetable food," said Mr. Jenkison, "there is much to be said on both sides; and, the question being in equipoise, I content myself with a mixed diet, and make a point of eating whatever is placed before me, provided it be good in its kind."

In this opinion his two brother philosophers practically coincided, though they both ran down the theory as highly detrimental to the best interests of man.

"I am really astonished," said the Reverend Doctor Gaster, gracefully picking off the supernal fragments of an egg he had just cracked, and clearing away a space at the top for the reception of a small piece of butter—"I am really astonished, gentlemen, at the very heterodox opinions I have heard you deliver: since nothing can be more

obvious than that all animals were created solely and exclusively for the use of man."

"Even the tiger that devours him?" said Mr. Escot.

"Certainly," said Doctor Gaster.

"How do you prove it?" said Mr. Escot.

"It requires no proof," said Doctor Gaster: "it is a point of doctrine. It is written, therefore it is so."

"Nothing can be more logical," said Mr. Jenkison. "It has been said," continued he, "that the ox was expressly made to be eaten by man: it may be said, by a parity of reasoning, that man was expressly made to be eaten by the tiger: but as wild oxen exist where there are no men, and men where there are no tigers, it would seem that in these instances they do not properly answer the ends of their creation."

"It is a mystery," said Dr. Gaster.

"Not to launch into the question of final causes," said Mr. Escot, helping himself at the same time to a slice of beef, "concerning which I will candidly acknowledge I am as profoundly ignorant as the most dogmatical theologian possibly can be, I just wish to observe, that the pure and peaceful manners which Homer ascribes to the Loto-phagi, and which at this day characterise many nations (the Hindoos, for example, who subsist exclusively on the fruits of the earth), depose very strongly in favour of a vegetable regimen."

"It may be said, on the contrary," said Mr. Foster, "that animal food acts on the mind as manure does on flowers, forcing them into a degree of expansion they would not otherwise have attained. If we can imagine a philosophical auricula falling into a train of theoretical meditation on its original and natural nutriment, till it should work itself up into a profound abomination of bullock's blood, sugar-baker's scum, and other *unnatural* ingredients of that rich composition of soil which had brought it to perfection*, and insist on being planted in common earth, it would have all the advantage of natural theory on its side that the most strenuous advocate of the vegetable system could desire; but it would soon discover

* See Emmerton on the Auricula.

the practical error of its retrograde experiment by its lamentable inferiority in strength and beauty to all the auriculas around it. I am afraid, in some instances at least, this analogy holds true with respect to mind. No one will make a comparison, in point of mental power, between the Hindoos and the ancient Greeks."

"The anatomy of the human stomach," said Mr. Escot, "and the formation of the teeth, clearly place man in the class of frugivorous animals."

"Many anatomists," said Mr. Foster, "are of a different opinion, and agree in discerning the characteristics of the carnivorous classes."

"I am no anatomist," said Mr. Jenkison, "and cannot decide where doctors disagree; in the mean time, I conclude that man is omnivorous, and on that conclusion I act."

"Your conclusion is truly orthodox," said the Reverend Doctor Gaster: "indeed, the loaves and fishes are typical of a mixed diet; and the practice of the Church in all ages shows——"

"That it never loses sight of the loaves and fishes," said Mr. Escot.

"It never loses sight of any point of sound doctrine," said the reverend doctor.

The coachman now informed them their time was elapsed; nor could all the pathetic remonstrances of the reverend divine, who declared he had not half breakfasted, succeed in gaining one minute from the inexorable Jehu.

"You will allow," said Mr. Foster, as soon as they were again in motion, "that the wild man of the woods could not transport himself over two hundred miles of forest, with as much facility as one of these vehicles transports you and me through the heart of this cultivated country."

"I am certain," said Mr. Escot, "that a wild man can travel an immense distance without fatigue; but what is the advantage of locomotion? The wild man is happy in one spot, and there he remains: the civilised man is wretched in every place he happens to be in, and then congratulates himself on being accommodated with a machine,"

that will whirl him to another, where he will be just as miserable as ever."

We shall now leave the mail-coach to find its way to Capel Cerig, the nearest point of the Holyhead road to the dwelling of Squire Headlong.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARRIVALS.

IN the midst of that scene of confusion thrice confounded, in which we left the inhabitants of Headlong Hall, arrived the lovely Caprioletta Headlong, the Squire's sister (whom he had sent for, from the residence of her maiden aunt at Caernarvon, to do the honours of his house), beaming like light on chaos, to arrange disorder and harmonise discord. The tempestuous spirit of her brother became instantaneously as smooth as the surface of the lake of Llanberis; and the little fat butler "plessed Cot, and St. 'Tafit, and the 'peautiful tamsel," for being permitted to move about the house in his natural pace. In less than twenty-four hours after her arrival, every thing was disposed in its proper station, and the Squire began to be all impatience for the appearance of his promised guests.

The first visitor with whom he had the felicity of shaking hands was Marmaduke Milestone, Esquire, who arrived with a portfolio under his arm. Mr. Milestone*

* Mr. Knight, in a note to the Landscape, having taken the liberty of laughing at a notable device of a celebrated *improver*, for giving greatness of character to a place, and showing an undivided extent of property, by placing the family arios on the neighbouring *milestones*, the improver retorted on him with a charge of misquotation, misrepresentation, and malice prepense. Mr. Knight, in the preface to the second edition of his poem, quotes the improver's words:—"The market-house, or other public edifice, or even a *mere stone with distances*, may bear the arms of the family:" and adds:—"By a *mere stone with distances*, the author of the Landscape certainly thought he meant a *milestone*; but, if he did not, any other interpretation which he may think more advantageous to himself shall readily be adopted, as it will equally answer the purpose of the quotation." The improver, however, did not condescend to explain what he really meant by a *mere stone with distances*, though he strenuously maintained that he did *not* mean a *milestone*. His idea, therefore, stands on record, invested with all the sublimity that obscurity can confer.

was a picturesque landscape gardener of the first celebrity, who was not without hopes of persuading Squire Headlong to put his romantic pleasure-grounds under a process of improvement, promising himself a signal triumph for his incomparable art in the difficult and, therefore, glorious achievement of polishing and trimming the rocks of Llanberris.

Next arrived a post-chaise from the inn at Capel Cerig, containing the Reverend Doctor Gaster. It appeared, that, when the mail-coach deposited its valuable cargo, early on the second morning, at the inn at Capel Cerig, there was only one post-chaise to be had ; it was therefore determined that the reverend Doctor and the luggage should proceed in the chaise, and that the three philosophers should walk. When the reverend gentleman first seated himself in the chaise, the windows were down all round ; but he allowed it to drive off under the idea that he could easily pull them up. This task, however, he had considerable difficulty in accomplishing, and when he had succeeded, it availed him little ; for the frames and glasses had long since discontinued their ancient familiarity. He had, however, no alternative but to proceed, and to comfort himself, as he went, with some choice quotations from the book of Job. The road led along the edges of tremendous chasms, with torrents dashing in the bottom ; so that, if his teeth had not chattered with cold, they would have done so with fear. The Squire shook him heartily by the hand, and congratulated him on his safe arrival at Headlong Hall. The Doctor returned the squeeze, and assured him that the congratulation was by no means misapplied.

Next came the three philosophers, highly delighted with their walk, and full of rapturous exclamations on the sublime beauties of the scenery.

The Doctor shrugged up his shoulders, and confessed he preferred the scenery of Putney and Kew, where a man could go comfortably to sleep in his chaise, without being in momentary terror of being hurled headlong down a precipice.

Mr. Milestone observed, that there were great capabilities in the scenery, but it wanted shaving and polish-

ing. If he could but have it under his care for a single twelvemonth, he assured them no one would be able to know it again.

Mr. Jenkison thought the scenery was just what it ought to be, and required no alteration.

Mr. Foster thought it could be improved, but doubted if that effect would be produced by the system of Mr. Milestone.

Mr. Escot did not think that any human being could improve it, but had no doubt of its having changed very considerably for the worse, since the days when the now barren rocks were covered with the immense forest of Snowdon, which must have contained a very fine race of wild men, not less than ten feet high.

The next arrival was that of Mr. Cranium, and his lovely daughter Miss Cephalis Cranium, who flew to the arms of her dear friend Caprioletta, with all that warmth of friendship which young ladies usually assume towards each other in the presence of young gentlemen.

Miss Cephalis blushed like a carnation at the sight of Mr. Escot, and Mr. Escot glowed like a corn-poppay at the sight of Miss Cephalis. It was at least obvious to all observers, that he could imagine the possibility of one change for the better, even in this terrestrial theatre of universal deterioration.

Mr. Cranium's eyes wandered from Mr. Escot to his daughter, and from his daughter to Mr. Escot; and his complexion, in the course of the scrutiny, underwent several variations, from the dark red of the piony to the deep blue of the convolvulus.

Mr. Escot had formerly been the received lover of Miss Cephalis, till he incurred the indignation of her father by laughing at a very profound craniological dissertation which the old gentlemen delivered; nor had Mr. Escot yet discovered the means of mollifying his wrath.

Mr. Cranium carried in his own hands a bag, the contents of which were too precious to be intrusted to

* "Il est constant qu'elles se baisent de meilleur cœur, et se caressent avec plus de grace devant les hommes, fieres d'aiguiser impunément leur convoitise par l'image des faveurs qu'elles savent leur faire envier." — ROUSSEAU, *Emile*, liv. 5.

any one but himself ; and earnestly entreated to be shown to the chamber appropriated for his reception, that he might deposit his treasure in safety. The little butler was accordingly summoned to conduct him to his *cubiculum*.

Next arrived a post-chaise, carrying four insides, whose extreme thinness enabled them to travel thus economically without experiencing the slightest inconvenience. These four personages were, two very profound critics, Mr. Gall and Mr. Treacle, who followed the trade of reviewers, but occasionally indulged themselves in the composition of bad poetry ; and two very multitudinous versifiers, Mr. Nightshade and Mr. Mac Laurel, who followed the trade of poetry, but occasionally indulged themselves in the composition of bad criticism. Mr. Nightshade and Mr. Mac Laurel were the two senior lieutenants of a very formidable corps of critics, of whom Timothy Treacle, Esquire, was captain, and Geoffrey Gall, Esquire, generalissimo.

The last arrivals were Mr. Cornelius Chromatic, the most profound and scientific of all amateurs of the fiddle, with his two blooming daughters, Miss Tenorina and Miss Graziosa ; Sir Patrick O'Prisin, a dilettante painter of high renown, and his maiden aunt, Miss Philomela Poppyseed, an indefatigable compounder of novels, written for the express purpose of supporting every species of superstition and prejudice ; and Mr. Panscope, the chemical, botanical, geological, astronomical, mathematical, metaphysical, meteorological, anatomical, physiological, galvanistical, musical, pictorial, bibliographical, critical philosopher, who had run through the whole circle of the sciences, and understood them all equally well.

Mr. Milestone was impatient to take a walk round the grounds, that he might examine how far the system of clumping and levelling could be carried advantageously into effect. The ladies retired to enjoy each other's society in the first happy moments of meeting : the Reverend Doctor Gaster sat by the library fire, in profound meditation over a volume of the "*Almanach des Gourmands* : " Mr. Panscope sat in the opposite corner with a volume of Rees's *Cyclopædia* : Mr. Cranium was •

busy up stairs: Mr. Chromatic retreated to the music-room, where he fiddled through a book of solos before the ringing of the first dinner-bell. The remainder of the party supported Mr. Milestone's proposition; and, accordingly, Squire Headlong and Mr. Milestone leading the van, they commenced their perambulation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GROUNDS.

"I PERCEIVE," said Mr. Milestone, after they had walked a few paces, "these grounds have never been touched by the finger of taste."

"The place is quite a wilderness," said Squire Headlong: "for, during the latter part of my father's life, while I was *finishing* my *education*, he troubled himself about nothing but the cellar, and suffered every thing else to go to rack and ruin. A mere wilderness, as you see, even now in December; but in summer a complete nursery of briars, a forest of thistles, a plantation of nettles, without any live stock but goats, that have eaten up all the bark of the trees. Here you see is the pedestal of a statue, with only half a leg and four toes remaining: there were many here once. When I was a boy, I used to sit every day on the shoulders of Hercules: what became of *him* I have never been able to ascertain. Neptune has been lying these seven years in the dust-hole; Atlas had his head knocked off to fit him for propping a shed; and only the day before yesterday we fished Bacchus out of the horse-pond."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Milestone, "accord me your permission to wave the wand of enchantment over your grounds. The rocks shall be blown up, the trees shall be cut down, the wilderness and all its goats shall vanish like mist. Pagodas and Chinese bridges, gravel walks and shrubberies, bowling-greens, canals, and clumps of larch,

shall rise upon its ruins. One age, sir, has brought to light the treasures of ancient learning ; a second has penetrated into the depths of metaphysics ; a third has brought to perfection the science of astronomy ; but it was reserved for the exclusive genius of the present times, to invent the noble art of picturesque gardening, which has given, as it were, a new tint to the complexion of nature, and a new outline to the physiognomy of the universe !”

“ Give me leave,” said Sir Patrick O’Prism, “ to take an exception to that same. Your system of levelling, and trimming, and clipping, and docking, and clumping, and polishing, and cropping, and shaving, destroys all the beautiful intricacies of natural luxuriance, and all the graduated harmonies of light and shade, melting into one another, as you see them on that rock over yonder. I never saw one of your improved places, as you call them, and which are nothing but big bowling-greens, like sheets of green paper, with a parcel of round clumps scattered over them, like so many spots of ink, flicked at random out of a pen *, and a solitary animal here and there looking as if it were lost, that I did not think it was for all the world like Hounslow Heath, thinly sprinkled over with bushes and highwaymen.”

“ Sir,” said Mr. Milestone, “ you will have the goodness to make a distinction between the picturesque and the beautiful.”

“ Will I ?” said Sir Patrick, “ och ! but I won’t. For what is beautiful ? That which pleases the eye. And what pleases the eye ? Tints variously broken and blended. Now, tints variously broken and blended constitute the picturesque.”

“ Allow me,” said Mr. Gall. “ I distinguish the picturesque and the beautiful, and I add to them, in the laying out of grounds, a third and distinct character, which I call *unexpectedness*.”

“ Pray, sir,” said Mr. Milestone, “ by what name do you distinguish this character, when a person walks round the grounds for the second time ?” †

* See Price on the Picturesque.

† See Knight on Taste, and the Edinburgh Review, No. XIV.

Mr. Gall bit his lips, and inwardly vowed to revenge himself on Milestone, by cutting up his next publication.

A long controversy now ensued concerning the picturesque and the beautiful, highly edifying to Squire Headlong.

The three philosophers stopped, as they wound round a projecting point of rock, to contemplate a little boat which was gliding over the tranquil surface of the lake below.

"The blessings of civilisation," said Mr. Foster, "extend themselves to the meanest individuals of the community. That boatman, singing as he sails along, is, I have no doubt, a very happy, and, comparatively to the men of his class some centuries back, a very enlightened and intelligent man."

"As a partisan of the system of the moral perfectibility of the human race," said Mr. Escot,—who was always for considering things on a large scale, and whose thoughts immediately wandered from the lake to the ocean, from the little boat to a ship of the line,—"you will probably be able to point out to me the degree of improvement that you suppose to have taken place in the character of a sailor, from the days when Jason sailed through the Cyprian Symplegades, or Noah moored his ark on the summit of Ararat.

"If you talk to me," said Mr. Foster, "of mythological personages, of course I cannot meet you on fair grounds."

"We will begin, if you please, then," said Mr. Escot, "no further back than the battle of Salamis; and I will ask you if you think the mariners of England are, in any one respect, morally or intellectually, superior to those who then preserved the liberties of Greece, under the direction of Themistocles?"

"I will venture to assert," said Mr. Foster, "that, considered merely as sailors, which is the only fair mode of judging them, they are as far superior to the Athenians, as the structure of our ships is superior to that of theirs. Would not one English seventy-four, think you, have been sufficient to have sunk, burned, and put to flight, all the Persian and Grecian vessels in that memorable bay? Contemplate the progress of naval architecture, and the slow,

but immense, succession of concatenated intelligence, by which it has gradually attained its present stage of perfectibility. In this, as in all other branches of art and science, every generation possesses all the knowledge of the preceding, and adds to it its own discoveries in a progression to which there seems no limit. The skill requisite to direct these immense machines is proportionate to their magnitude and complicated mechanism ; and, therefore, the English sailor, considered merely as a sailor, is vastly superior to the ancient Greek."

" You make a distinction, of course," said Mr. Escot, " between scientific and moral perfectibility ? "

" I conceive," said Mr. Foster, " that men are virtuous in proportion as they are enlightened ; and that, as every generation increases in knowledge, it also increases in virtue."

" I wish it were so," said Mr. Escot ; " but to me the very reverse appears to be the fact. The progress of knowledge is not general : it is confined to a chosen few of every age. How far these are better than their neighbours, we may examine by and bye. The mass of mankind is composed of beasts of burden, mere clods, and tools of their superiors. By enlarging and complicating your machines, you degrade, not exalt, the human animals you employ to direct them. When the boatswain of a seventy-four pipes all hands to the main tack, and flourishes his rope's end over the shoulders of the poor fellows who are tugging at the ropes, do you perceive so dignified, so gratifying a picture, as Ulysses exhorting his dear friends, his ΕΠΗΙΠΕΣ 'ΕΤΑΙΡΟΙ, to ply their oars with energy ? You will say, Ulysses was a fabulous character. But the economy of his vessel is drawn from nature. Every man on board has a character and a will of his own. He talks to them, argues with them, convinces them ; and they obey him, because they love him, and know the reason of his orders. Now, as I have said before, all singleness of character is lost. We divide men into herds like cattle : an individual man, if you strip him of all that is extraneous to himself, is the most wretched and contemptible creature on the face of the earth. The sciences advance. True.

A few years of study puts a modern mathematician in possession of more than Newton knew, and leaves him at leisure to add new discoveries of his own. Agreed. But does this make him a Newton? Does it put him in possession of that range of intellect, that grasp of mind, from which the discoveries of Newton sprang? It is mental power that I look for: if you can demonstrate the increase of that, I will give up the field. Energy — independence — individuality — disinterested virtue — active benevolence — self-oblivion — universal philanthropy — these are the qualities I desire to find, and of which I contend that every succeeding age produces fewer examples. I repeat it; there is scarcely such a thing to be found as a single individual man: a few classes compose the whole frame of society, and when you know one of a class you know the whole of it. Give me the wild man of the woods; the original, unthinking, unscientific, unlogical savage: in him there is at least some good; but, in a civilised, sophisticated, cold-blooded, mechanical, calculating slave of Mammon and the world, there is none — absolutely none. Sir, if I fall into a river, an unsophisticated man will jump in and bring me out; but a philosopher will look on with the utmost calmness, and consider me in the light of a projectile, and, making a calculation of the degree of force with which I have impinged the surface, the resistance of the fluid, the velocity of the current, and the depth of the water in that particular place, he will ascertain with the greatest nicety in what part of the mud at the bottom I may probably be found, at any given distance of time from the moment of my first immersion."

Mr. Foster was preparing to reply, when the first dinner-bell rang, and he immediately commenced a precipitate return towards the house; followed by his two companions, who both admitted that he was now leading the way to at least a temporary period of physical amelioration: "but, alas!" added Mr. Escot, after a moment's reflection, "*Epulæ NOUERE repostæ!*"*

* Protracted banquets have been copious sources of evil.

CHAPTER V.

THE DINNER.

THE sun was now terminating his diurnal course, and the lights were glittering on the festal board. When the ladies had retired, and the Burgundy had taken two or three tours of the table, the following conversation took place : —

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Push about the bottle : Mr. Escot, it stands with you. No heeltaps. As to skylight, liberty-hall.

MR. MAO LAUREL.

Really, Squire Headlong, this is the vara nectar itself. Ye hae saretainly discovered the tarrestrial paradise, but it flows wi' a better leccor than milk an' honey.

THE REVEREND DOCTOR GASTER.

Hem ! Mr. Mac Laurel ! there is a degree of profaneness in that observation, which I should not have looked for in so staunch a supporter of church and state. Milk and honey was the pure food of the antediluvian patriarchs, who knew not the use of the grape, happily for them. — (*Tossing off a bumper of Burgundy.*)

MR. ESCOT.

Happily, indeed ! The first inhabitants of the world knew not the use either of wine or animal food ; it is, therefore, by no means incredible that they lived to the age of several centuries, free from war, and commerce, and arbitrary government, and every other species of desolating wickedness. But man was then a very different animal to what he now is : he had not the faculty of speech ; he was not encumbered with clothes ; he lived in the open air ; his first step out of which, as Hamlet truly observes, is *into his grave*.* His first dwellings, of course, were the hollows of trees and rocks. In process of time he began to build : thence grew villages ; thence grew cities. Luxury,

* See Lord Monboddo's *Ancient Metaphysics*.

oppression, poverty, misery, and disease kept pace with the progress of his pretended improvements, till, from a free, strong, healthy, peaceful animal, he has become a weak, distempered, cruel, carnivorous slave.

THE REVEREND DOCTOR GASTER.

Your doctrine is orthodox, in so far as you assert that the original man was not encumbered with clothes, and that he lived in the open air ; but, as to the faculty of speech, that, it is certain, he had, for the authority of Moses —

MR. ESCOT.

Of course, sir, I do not presume to dissent from the very exalted authority of that most enlightened astronomer and profound cosmogonist, who had, moreover, the advantage of being inspired ; but when I indulge myself with a ramble in the fields of speculation, and attempt to deduce what is probable and rational from the sources of analysis, experience, and comparison, I confess I am too often apt to lose sight of the doctrines of that great fountain of theological and geological philosophy.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Push about the bottle.

MR. FOSTER.

Do you suppose the mere animal life of a wild man, living on acorns, and sleeping on the ground, comparable in felicity to that of a Newton, ranging through unlimited space, and penetrating into the arcana of universal motion—to that of a Locke, unravelling the labyrinth of mind—to that of a Lavoisier, detecting the minutest combinations of matter, and reducing all nature to its elements—to that of a Shakspeare, piercing and developing the springs of passion—or of a Milton, identifying himself, as it were, with the beings of an invisible world ?

MR. ESCOT.

You suppose extreme cases : but, on the score of happiness, what comparison can you make between the tranquil being of the wild man of the woods and the wretched and turbulent existence of Milton, the victim of persecution, poverty, blindness, and neglect ? The records of literature

demonstrate that Happiness and Intelligence are seldom sisters. Even if it were otherwise, it would prove nothing. The many are always sacrificed to the few. Where one man advances, hundreds retrograde ; and the balance is always in favour of universal deterioration.

MR. FOSTER.

Virtue is independent of external circumstances. The exalted understanding looks into the truth of things, and, in its own peaceful contemplations, rises superior to the world. No philosopher would resign his mental acquisitions for the purchase of any terrestrial good.

MR. ESCOT.

In other words, no man whatever would resign his identity, which is nothing more than the consciousness of his perceptions, as the price of any acquisition. But every man, without exception, would willingly effect a very material change in his relative situation to other individuals. Unluckily for the rest of your argument, the understanding of literary people is for the most part *exalted*, as you express it, not so much by the love of truth and virtue, as by arrogance and self-sufficiency ; and there is, perhaps, less disinterestedness, less liberality, less general benevolence, and more envy, hatred, and uncharitableness among them, than among any other description of men.

(*The eye of Mr. Escot, as he pronounced these words, rested very innocently and unintentionally on Mr. Gall.*)

MR. GALL.

You allude, sir, I presume, to my review.

MR. ESCOT.

Pardon me, sir. You will be convinced it is impossible I can allude to your review, when I assure you that I have never read a single page of it.

MR. GALL, MR. TREACLE, MR. NIGHTSHADE, AND

MR. MAC LAUREL.

Never read our review !!!!

MR. ESCOT.

Never. I look on periodical criticism in general to be a

species of shop, where panegyric and defamation are sold, wholesale, retail, and for exportation. I am not inclined to be a purchaser of these commodities, or to encourage a trade which I consider pregnant with mischief.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

I can readily conceive, sir, ye wou'd na wullinly encourage any dealer in panegyric: but, frae the manner in which ye speak o' the first creetics an' scholars o' the age, I shou'd think ye wou'd hae a leetle mair predilection for deefamation.

MR. ESCOT.

I have no predilection, sir, for defamation. I make a point of speaking the truth on all occasions; and it seldom happens that the truth can be spoken without some stricken deer pronouncing it a libel.

MR. NIGHTSHADE.

You are perhaps, sir, an enemy to literature in general?

MR. ESCOT.

If I were, sir, I should be a better friend to periodical critics.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Buz!

MR. TREACLE.

May I simply take the liberty to inquire into the basis of your objection?

MR. ESCOT.

I conceive that periodical criticism disseminates superficial knowledge, and its perpetual adjunct, vanity; that it checks in the youthful mind the habit of thinking for itself; that it delivers partial opinions, and thereby misleads the judgment; that it is never conducted with a view to the general interests of literature, but to serve the interested ends of individuals, and the miserable purposes of party.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

Ye ken, sir, a mon mun leeve.

MR. ESCOT.

While he can live honourably, naturally, justly, certainly : no longer.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

Every mon, sir, leeves according to his ain notions of honour an' justice: there is a wee defference among the learned wi' respect to the definecton o' the terms.

MR. ESoot.

I believe it is generally admitted, that one of the ingredients of justice is disinterestedness.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

It is na admctted, Sir, among the pheelosophers of Edinbroo', that there is ony sic thing as desenterestedness in the world, or that a mon can care for onything sae much as his ain sel: for ye mun observe, sir, every mon has his ain parteeular feelings of what is gude, an' beautifu', an' consentaneous to his ain indiveedual nature, an' desires to see every thing aboot him in that parteeular state which is maist conformable to his ain notions o' the moral an' po-leetical fetness o' things. Twa men, sir, shall purchase a piece o' grund atween 'em, and ae mon shall cover his half wi' a park——

MR. MILESTONE.

Beautifully laid out in lawns and clumps, with a belt of trees at the circumference, and an artificial lake in the centre.

MR. MAO LAUREL.

Exactly, sir: an' shall keep it a' for his ain sel: an' the other mon shall divide his half into leetle farms of twa or three acres——

MR. ESCOT.

Like those of the Roman republic, and build a cottage on each of them, and cover his land with a simple, innocent, and smiling population, who shall owe, not only their happiness, but their existence, to his benevolence.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

Exactly, sir: an' ye will ca' the first mon selfish, an' the

second descenterested ; but the pheclosophical truth is simply this, that the anc is pleased wi' looking at trees, an' the other wi' seeing people happy an' comfortable. It is aunly a matter of indivieedual feeling. A paisant saves a mon's life for the same reason that a hero or a footpad cuts his thrapple : an' a pheclosopher delevs a mon frae a preson, for the same reason that a tailor or a prime menester puts him into it : because it is conformable to his ain parteeccular feelings o' the moral an' poleetical fetness o' things.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Wake the Reverend Doctor. Doctor, the bottle stands with you.

THE REVEREND DOCTOR GASTER.

It is an error of which I am seldom guilty.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

Noo, ye ken, sir, every mon is the centre of his ain system, an' endaivours as much as possible to adapt every thing around him to his ain parteeccular views.

MR. ESCOT.

Thus, sir, I presume, it suits the particular views of a poet, at one time to take the part of the people against their oppressors, and at another, to take the part of the oppressors, against the people.

MR. MAC LAUREL.

Ye mun alloo, sir, that poetry is a sort of ware or commodity, that is brought into the public market wi' a' other descreptions of merchandisc, an' that a mon is pairfectly justified in getting the best price he can for his article. Noo, there are three reasons for taking the part o' the people : the first is, when general leeberly an' public happiness are conformable to your ain parteeccular feelings o' the moral an' poleetical fetness o' things : the second is, when they happen to be, as it were, in a state of exceetabeelity, an' ye think ye can get a gude price for your commodity, by flingin' in a leetle seasoning o' pheelanthropy an' republican speerit : the third is, when ye think ye can bully the meneztry into gieing ye a place or a pansion to hau'd your din, an' in that case, ye point an attack against them within the pale

o' the law ; an' if they tak nae heed o' ye, ye open a stronger fire ; an' the less heed they tak, the mair ye bawl ; an' the mair factious ye grow, always within the pale o' the law, till they send a plenipotentiary to treat wi' ye for yoursel, an' then the mair popular ye happen to be, the better price ye fetch.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Off with your heeltaps.

MR. CRANIUM.

I perfectly agree with Mr. Mac Laurel in his definition of self-love and disinterestedness : every man's actions are determined by his peculiar views, and those views are determined by the organization of his skull. A man in whom the organ of benevolence is not developed, cannot be benevolent : he, in whom it is so, cannot be otherwise. The organ of self-love is prodigiously developed in the greater number of subjects that have fallen under my observation.

MR. ESCOT.

Much less, I presume, among savage than civilised men, who, *constant only to the love of self, and consistent only in their aim to deceive, are always actuated by the hope of personal advantage, or by the dread of personal punishment.* *

MR. CRANIUM.

Very probably.

MR. ESCOT.

You have, of course, found very copious specimens of the organs of hypocrisy, destruction, and avarice.

MR. CRANIUM.

Secretivness, destructivness, and covetiveness. You may add, if you please, that of constructiveness.

MR. ESCOT.

Meaning, I presume, the organ of building ; which I contend to be not a natural organ of the *featherless biped*.

MR. CRANIUM.

Pardon me : it is here. — (*As he said these words, he produced a skull from his pocket, and placed it on the table, to*

* Drummond's Academical Questions.

the great surprise of the company.)—This was the skull of Sir Christopher Wren. You observe this protuberance—*(The skull was handed round the table.)*

MR. ESCOT.

I contend that the original unsophisticated man was by no means constructive. He lived in the open air, under a tree.

THE REVEREND DOCTOR GASTER.

The tree of life. Unquestionably. Till he had tasted the forbidden fruit.

MR. JENKISON.

At which period, probably, the organ of constructiveness was added to his anatomy, as a punishment for his transgression.

MR. ESCOT.

There could not have been a more severe one, since the propensity which has led him to building cities has proved the greatest curse of his existence.

SQUIRE HEADLONG — *(taking the skull.)*

Memento mori. Come, a bumper of Burgundy.

MR. NIGHTSHADE.

A very classical application, Squire Headlong. The Romans were in the practice of adhibiting skulls at their banquets, and sometimes little skeletons of silver, as a silent admonition to the guests to enjoy life while it lasted.

THE REVEREND DOCTOR GASTER.

Sound doctrine, Mr. Nightshade.

MR. ESCOT.

I question its soundness. The use of vinous spirit has a tremendous influence in the deterioration of the human race.

MR. FOSTER.

I fear, indeed, it operates as a considerable check to the progress of the species towards moral and intellectual perfection. Yet many great men have been of opinion that it exalts the imagination, fires the genius, accelerates

the flow of ideas, and imparts to dispositions naturally cold and deliberative that enthusiastic sublimation which is the source of greatness and energy.

MR. NIGHTSHADE.

*Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.**

MR. JENKISON.

I conceive the use of wine to be always pernicious in excess, but often useful in moderation: it certainly kills some, but it saves the lives of others: I find that an occasional glass, taken with judgment and caution, has a very salutary effect in maintaining that equilibrium of the system, which it is always my aim to preserve; and this calm and temperate use of wine was, no doubt, what Homer meant to inculcate, when he said:

Παρ δὲ δεπας οἶνοιο, πίνειν ὅτε θυμὸς ἀνώγει. †

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Good. Pass the bottle.

(*Un morne silence.*)

Sir Christopher does not seem to have raised our spirits. Chromatic, favour us with a specimen of your vocal powers. Something in point.

Mr. Chromatic, without further preface, immediately struck up the following

SONG.

In his last blnn SIR PETER lies,
Who knew not what it was to frown:
Death took him mellow, by surprise,
And in his cellar stopped him down.
Through all our land we could not boast
A knight more gay, more prompt than he,
To rise and fill a bumper toast,
And pass it round with THREE TIMES THREE.

None better knew the feast to sway,
Or keep Mirth's boat in better trim;
For Nature had but little clay
Like that of which she moulded him.
The meanest guest that graced his board
Was there the freest of the free,
His bumper toast when PETER poured,
And passed it round with THREE TIMES THREE.

* Homer is proved to have been a lover of wine by the praises he bestows upon it.

† A cup of wine at hand, to drink as inclination prompts.

He kept at true good humour's mark
 The social flow of pleasure's tide :
 He never made a brow look dark,
 Nor caused a tear, but when he died.
 No sorrow round his tomb should dwell :
 More pleased his gay old ghost would be,
 For funeral song, and passing bell,
 To hear no sound but THREE TIMES THREE.

(*Hammering of knuckles and glasses, and shouts of
 Bravo !*)

MR. PANSCOPE.

(*Suddenly emerging from a deep reverie.*)

I have heard, with the most profound attention, every thing which the gentleman on the other side of the table has thought proper to advance on the subject of human deterioration ; and I must take the liberty to remark, that it augurs a very considerable degree of presumption in any individual, to set himself up against the *authority* of so many great men, as may be marshalled in metaphysical phalanx under the opposite banners of the controversy ; such as Aristotle, Plato, the scholiast on Aristophanes, St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Athanasius, Orpheus, Pindar, Simonides, Gronovius, Hemsterhusius, Longinus, Sir Isaac Newton, Thomas Paine, Doctor Paley, the King of Prussia, the King of Poland, Cicero, Monsieur Gautier, Hippocrates, Machiavelli, Milton, Colley Cibber, Bojardo, Gregory Nazianzenus, Loeke, D'Alembert, Boeaccio, Daniel Defoe, Erasmus, Doctor Smollett, Zimmermann, Solomon, Confucius, Zoroaster, and Thomas-a-Kempis.

MR. ESCOT.

I presume, sir, you are one of those who value an *authority* more than a reason.

MR. PANSCOPE.

The *authority*, sir, of all these great men, whose works, as well as the whole of the Encyclopædia Britannica, the entire series of the Monthly Review, the complete set of the Variorum Classics, and the Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions, I have read through from beginning to end, deposes, with irrefragable refutation, against your ratiocinative speculations, wherein you seem desirous, by the futile process of analytical dialectics, to subvert the pyramidal structure of synthetically deduced opinions,

which have withstood the secular revolutions of physiological disquisition, and which I maintain to be transcendently self-evident, categorically certain, and syllogistically demonstrable.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Bravo! Pass the bottle. The very best speech that ever was made.

MR. ESCOT.

It has only the slight disadvantage of being unintelligible.

MR. PANSCOPE.

I am not obliged, sir, as Dr. Johnson observed on a similar occasion, to furnish you with an understanding.

MR. ESCOT.

I fear, sir, you would have some difficulty in furnishing me with such an article from your own stock.

MR. PANSCOPE.

'Sdeath, sir, do you question my understanding?

MR. ESCOT.

I only question, sir, where I expect a reply; which, from things that have no existence, I am not visionary enough to anticipate.

MR. PANSCOPE.

I beg leave to observe, sir, that my language was perfectly perspicuous, and etymologically correct; and, I conceive, I have demonstrated what I shall now take the liberty to say in plain terms, that all your opinions are extremely absurd.

MR. ESCOT.

I should be sorry, sir, to advance any opinion that you would not think absurd.

MR. PANSCOPE.

Death and fury, sir——

MR. ESCOT.

Say no more, sir. That apology is quite sufficient.

MR. PANSCOPE.

Apology, sir?

MR. ESCOT.

Even so, sir. You have lost your temper, which I consider equivalent to a confession that you have the worst of the argument.

MR. PANSCOPE.

Lightning and devils! sir——

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

No civil war!—Temperance, in the name of Bacchus!—A glee! a glee! *Music has charms to bend the knotted oak.* Sir Patrick, you'll join?

SIR PATRICK O'PRISM.

Troth, with all my heart: for, by my soul, I'm bothered completely.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Agreed, then: you, and I, and Chromatic. Bumpers!—bumpers! Come, strike up.

Squire Headlong, Mr. Chromatic, and Sir Patrick O'Prism, each holding a bumper, immediately vociferated the following

GLEE.

A heeltap! a heeltap! I never could bear it!
So fill me a bumper, a bumper of claret!
Let the bottle pass freely, don't shirk it nor spare it,
For a heeltap! a heeltap! I never could bear it!

No skylight! no twilight! while Bacchus rules o'er us:
No thinking! no shrinking! all drinking in chorus:
Let us moisten our clay, since 't is thirsty and porous:
No thinking! no shrinking! all drinking in chorus!

GRAND CHORUS.

*By Squire Headlong, Mr. Chromatic, Sir Patrick O'Prism,
Mr. Panscope, Mr. Jenkison, Mr. Gull, Mr. Treacle,
Mr. Nightshade, Mr. Mac Laurel, Mr. Cranium,
Mr. Milestone, and the Reverend Doctor Gaster.*

A heeltap! a heeltap! I never could bear it!
So fill me a bumper, a bumper of claret!
Let the bottle pass freely, don't shirk it nor spare it,
For a heeltap! a heeltap! I never could bear it!

‘ΟΜΑΔΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΟΤΗΟΣ ΟΡΟΠΕΙ!’

The little butler now waddled in with a summons from the ladies to tea and coffee. The squire was unwilling to leave his Burgundy. Mr. Escot strenuously urged the necessity of immediate adjournment, observing, that the longer they continued drinking the worse they should be. Mr. Foster seconded the motion, declaring the transition from the bottle to female society to be an indisputable amelioration of the state of the sensitive man. Mr. Jenkison allowed the squire and his two brother philosophers to settle the point between them, concluding that he was just as well in one place as another. The question of adjournment was then put, and carried by a large majority.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EVENING.

MR. PANSCOPE, highly irritated by the cool contempt with which Mr. Escot had treated him, sat sipping his coffee and meditating revenge. He was not long in discovering the passion of his antagonist for the beautiful Cephalis, for whom he had himself a species of predilection; and it was also obvious to him, that there was some lurking anger in the mind of her father, unfavourable to the hopes of his rival. The stimulus of revenge, superadded to that of preconceived inclination, determined him, after due deliberation, to *cut out* Mr. Escot in the young lady's favour. The practicability of this design he did not trouble himself to investigate; for the havoc he had made in the hearts of some silly girls, who were extremely vulnerable to flattery, and who, not understanding a word he said, considered him a *prodigious clever man*, had impressed him with an unhesitating idea of his own irresistibility. He had not only the requisites already specified for fascinating female vanity, he could likewise fiddle with tolerable dexterity, though by no means so *quick* as Mr. Chromatic (for our readers are of course aware that rapidity of execution, not

delicacy of expression, constitutes the scientific perfection of modern music), and could warble a fashionable love-ditty with considerable affectation of feeling: besides this, he was always extremely well dressed, and was heir-apparent to an estate of ten thousand a-year. The influence which the latter consideration might have on the minds of the majority of his female acquaintance, whose morals had been formed by the novels of such writers as Miss Philomela Poppysced, did not once enter into his calculation of his own personal attractions. Relying, therefore, on past success, he determined to *appeal to his fortune*, and already, in imagination, considered himself sole lord and master of the affections of the beautiful Cephalis.

Mr. Escot and Mr. Foster were the only two of the party who had entered the library (to which the ladies had retired, and which was interior to the music-room) in a state of perfect sobriety. Mr. Escot had placed himself next to the beautiful Cephalis: Mr. Cranium had laid aside much of the terror of his frown; the short craniological conversation, which had passed between him and Mr. Escot, had softened his heart in his favour; and the copious libations of Burgundy in which he had indulged had smoothed his brow into unusual serenity.

Mr. Foster placed himself near the lovely Caprioletta, whose artless and innocent conversation had already made an impression on his susceptible spirit.

The Reverend Doctor Gaster seated himself in the corner of a sofa near Miss Philomela Poppysced. Miss Philomela detailed to him the plan of a very moral and aristocratical novel she was preparing for the press, and continued holding forth, with her eyes half shut, till a long-drawn nasal tone from the reverend divine compelled her suddenly to open them in all the indignation of surprise. The cessation of the hum of her voice awakened the reverend gentleman, who, lifting up first one eyelid, then the other, articulated, or rather murmured, "Admirably planned, indeed!"

"I have not quite finished, sir," said Miss Philomela,

bridling. "Will you have the goodness to inform me where I left off?"

The doctor hummed a while, and at length answered: "I think you had just laid it down as a position, that a thousand a-year is an indispensable ingredient in the passion of love, and that no man, who is not so far gifted by *nature*, can reasonably presume to feel that passion himself, or be correctly the object of it with a well-educated female."

"That, sir," said Miss Philomela, highly incensed, "is the fundamental principle which I lay down in the first chapter, and which the whole four volumes, of which I detailed to you the outline, are intended to set in a strong practical light."

"Bless me!" said the doctor, "what a nap I must have had!"

Miss Philomela flung away to the side of her dear friends Gall and Treacle, under whose fostering patronage she had been puffed into an extensive reputation, much to the advantage of the young ladies of the age, whom she taught to consider themselves as a sort of commodity, to be put up at public auction, and knocked down to the highest bidder. Mr. Nightshade and Mr. Mac Laurel joined the trio; and it was secretly resolved, that Miss Philomela should furnish them with a portion of her manuscripts, and that Messieurs Gall and Co. should devote the following morning to cutting and drying a critique on a work calculated to prove so extensively beneficial, that Mr. Gall protested he really *envied* the writer.

While this amiable and enlightened quintetto were busily employed in flattering one another, Mr. Cranium retired to complete the preparations he had begun in the morning for a lecture, with which he intended, on some future evening, to favour the company: Sir Patrick O'Prism walked out into the grounds to study the effect of moonlight on the snow-clad mountains: Mr. Foster and Mr. Escot continued to make love, and Mr. Panscope to digest his plan of attack on the heart of Miss Cephalis: Mr. Jenkison sate by the fire, reading *Much Ado about Nothing*: the Reverend Doctor Gaster was still enjoying

the benefit of Miss Philomela's opiate, and serenading the company from his solitary corner: Mr. Chromatic was reading music, and occasionally humming a note: and Mr. Milestone had produced his portfolio for the edification and amusement of Miss Tenorina, Miss Graziosa, and Squire Headlong, to whom he was pointing out the various beauties of his plan for Lord Littlebrain's park.

MR. MILESTONE.

This, you perceive, is the natural state of one part of the grounds. Here is a wood, never yet touched by the finger of taste; thick, intricate, and gloomy. Here is a little stream, dashing from stone to stone, and overshadowed with these untrimmed boughs.

MISS TENORINA.

The sweet romantic spot! How beautifully the birds must sing there on a summer evening!

MISS ORAZIOSA.

Dear sister! how can you endure the horrid thicket?

MR. MILESTONE.

You are right, Miss Graziosa: your taste is correct — perfectly *en règle*. Now, here is the same place corrected — trimmed — polished — decorated — adorned. Here sweeps a plantation, in that beautiful regular curve: there winds a gravel walk: here are parts of the old wood, left in these majestic circular clumps, disposed at equal distances with wonderful symmetry: there are some single shrubs scattered in elegant profusion: here a Portugal laurel, there a juniper; here a lauristinus, there a spruce fir; here a larch, there a lilac; here a rhododendron, there an arbutus. The stream, you see, is become a canal: the banks are perfectly smooth and green, sloping to the water's edge: and there is Lord Littlebrain, rowing in an elegant boat.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Magical, faith!

MR. MILESTONE.

Here is another part of the grounds in its natural state. Here is a large rock, with the mountain-ash rooted in its

fissures, overgrown, as you see, with ivy and moss; and from this part of it bursts a little fountain, that runs bubbling down its rugged sides.

MISS TENORINA.

O how beautiful! How I should love the melody of that miniature cascade!

MR. MILESTONE.

Beautiful, Miss Tenorina! Hideous. Base, common, and popular. Such a thing as you may see anywhere, in wild and mountainous districts. Now, observe the metamorphosis. Here is the same rock, cut into the shape of a giant. In one hand he holds a horn, through which that little fountain is thrown to a prodigious elevation. In the other is a ponderous stone, so exactly balanced as to be apparently ready to fall on the head of any person who may happen to be beneath*: and there is Lord Littlebrain walking under it.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Miraculous, by Mahomet!

MR. MILESTONE.

This is the summit of a hill, covered, as you perceive, with wood, and with those mossy stones scattered at random under the trees.

MISS TENORINA.

What a delightful spot to read in, on a summer's day! The air must be so pure, and the wind must sound so divinely in the tops of those old pines!

MR. MILESTONE.

Bad taste, Miss Tenorina. Bad taste, I assure you. Here is the spot improved. The trees are cut down: the stones are cleared away: this is an octagonal pavilion, exactly on the centre of the summit: and there you see Lord Littlebrain, on the top of the pavilion, enjoying the prospect with a telescope.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Glorious, egad!

* See Knight on Taste.

MR. MILESTONE.

Here is a rugged mountainous road, leading through impervious shades: the ass and the four goats characterise a wild uncultured scene. Here, as you perceive, it is totally changed into a beautiful gravel-road, gracefully curving through a belt of limes: and there is Lord Littlebrain driving four-in-hand.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

Egregious, by Jupiter!

MR. MILESTONE.

Here is Littlebrain Castle, a Gothic, moss-grown structure, half-bosomed in trees. Near the casement of that turret is an owl peeping from the ivy.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

And devilish wise he looks.

MR. MILESTONE.

Here is the new house, without a tree near it, standing in the midst of an undulating lawn: a white, polished, angular building, reflected to a nicety in this waveless lake: and there you see lord Littlebrain looking out of the window.

SQUIRE HEADLONG.

And devilish wise he looks too. You shall cut me a giant before you go.

MR. MILESTONE.

Good. I'll order down my little corps of pioneers.

During this conversation, a hot dispute had arisen between Messieurs Gall and Nightshade; the latter pertinaciously insisting on having his new poem reviewed by Treacle, who he knew would extol it most loftily, and not by Gall, whose sarcastic commendation he held in superlative horror. The remonstrances of Squire Headlong silenced the disputants, but did not mollify the inflexible Gall, nor appease the irritated Nightshade, who secretly resolved that, on his return to London, he would beat his drum in Grub Street, form a mastigophoric corps of his own, and hoist the standard of determined opposition against this critical Napoleon.

Sir Patrick O'Prism now entered, and, after some rapturous exclamations on the effect of the mountain-moonlight, entreated that one of the young ladies would favour him with a song. Miss Tenorina and Miss Graziosa now enchanted the company with some very scientific compositions, which, as usual, excited admiration and astonishment in every one, without a single particle of genuine pleasure. The beautiful Cephalis being then summoned to take her station at the harp, sang with feeling and simplicity the following air: —

LOVE AND OPPORTUNITY.

Oh! who art thou, so swiftly flying?
 My name is Love, the child replied:
 Swifter I pass than south-winds sighing,
 Or streams, through summer vales that glide.
 And who art thou, his flight pursuing?
 'T is cold Neglect whom now you see:
 The little god you there are viewing,
 Will die, if once he's touched by me.

* Oh! who art thou so fast proceeding,
 Ne'er glancing back thine eyes of flame?
 Marked but by few, through earth I'm speeding,
 And Opportunity's my name.
 What form is that, which scowls beside thee?
 Repentance is the form you see:
 Learn then, the fate may yet betide thee:
 She seizes them who seize not me.

The little butler now appeared with a summons to supper, shortly after which the party dispersed for the night.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WALK.

It was an old custom in Headlong Hall to have breakfast ready at eight, and continue it till two; that the various guests might rise at their own hour, breakfast when they came down, and employ the morning as they thought proper; the squire only expecting that they should punctually assemble at dinner. During the whole of this period, the

* This stanza is imitated from Machiavelli's *Capitolo dell' Occasione*.

little butler stood sentinel at a side-table near the fire, copiously furnished with all the apparatus of tea, coffee, chocolate, milk, cream, eggs, rolls; toast, muffins, bread, butter, potted beef, cold fowl and partridge, ham, tongue, and anchovy. The Reverend Doctor Gaster found himself rather *queasy* in the morning, therefore preferred breakfasting in bed, on a mug of buttered ale and an anchovy toast. The three philosophers made their appearance at eight, and enjoyed *les premières des dépouilles*. Mr. Foster proposed that, as it was a fine frosty morning, and they were all good pedestrians, they should take a walk to Tremadoc, to see the improvements carrying on in that vicinity. This being readily acceded to, they began their walk.

After their departure, appeared Squire Headlong and Mr. Milestone, who agreed, over their muffin and partridge, to walk together to a ruined tower, within the precincts of the squire's grounds, which Mr. Milestone thought he could improve.

The other guests dropped in by one's and two's, and made their respective arrangements for the morning. Mr. Panscope took a little ramble with Mr. Cranium, in the course of which, the former professed a great enthusiasm for the science of craniology, and a great deal of love for the beautiful Cephalis, adding a few words about his expectations: the old gentleman was unable to withstand this triple battery, and it was accordingly determined — after the manner of the heroic age, in which it was deemed superfluous to consult the opinions and feelings of the lady, as to the manner in which she should be disposed of — that the lovely Miss Cranium should be made the happy bride of the accomplished Mr. Panscopc. We shall leave them for the present to settle preliminaries, while we accompany the three philosophers in their walk to Tremadoc.

The vale contracted as they advanced, and, when they had passed the termination of the lake, their road wound along a narrow and romantic pass, through the middle of which an impetuous torrent dashed over vast fragments of stone. The pass was bordered on both sides by perpendicular rocks, broken into the wildest forms of fantastic magnificence.

"These are, indeed," said Mr. Escot, "*confracti mundi rudera**:" yet they must be feeble images of the valleys of the Andes, where the philosophic eye may contemplate, in their utmost extent, the effects of that tremendous convulsion which destroyed the perpendicularity of the poles, and inundated this globe with that torrent of physical evil, from which the greater torrent of moral evil has issued, that will continue to roll on, with an expansive power and an accelerated impetus, till the whole human race shall be swept away in its vortex."

"The precession of the equinoxes" said Mr. Foster, "will gradually ameliorate the physical state of our planet, till the ecliptic shall again coincide with the equator, and the equal diffusion of light and heat over the whole surface of the earth typify the equal and happy existence of man, who will then have attained the final step of pure and perfect intelligence."

"It is by no means clear," said Mr. Jenkison, "that the axis of the earth was ever perpendicular to the plane of its orbit, or that it ever will be so. Explosion and convulsion are necessary to the maintenance of either hypothesis: for La Place has demonstrated, that the precession of the equinoxes is only a secular equation of a very long period, which, of course, proves nothing either on one side or the other."

They now emerged, by a winding ascent, from the vale of Llanberris, and after some little time arrived at Bedd Gelert. Proceeding through the sublimely romantic pass of Aberglaslynn, their road led along the edge of Traeth Mawr, a vast arm of the sea, which they then beheld in all the magnificence of the flowing tide. Another five miles brought them to the embankment, which has since been completed, and which, by connecting the two counties of Meirionnydd and Caernarvon, excludes the sea from an extensive tract. The embankment, which was carried on at the same time from both the opposite coasts, was then very nearly meeting in the centre. They walked to the extremity of that part of it which was thrown out from the Caernarvonshire shore. The tide was now ebbing: it

* Fragments of a demolished world.

had filled the vast basin within, forming a lake about five miles in length and more than one in breadth. As they looked upwards with their backs to the open sea, they beheld a scene which no other in this country can parallel, and which the admirers of the magnificence of nature will ever remember with regret, whatever consolation may be derived from the probable utility of the works which have excluded the waters from their ancient receptacle. Vast rocks and precipices, intersected with little torrents, formed the barrier on the left: on the right, the triple summit of Moelwyn reared its majestic boundary: in the depth was that sea of mountains, the wild and stormy outline of the Snowdonian chain, with the giant Wyddfa towering in the midst. The mountain-frame remains unchanged, unchangeable; but the liquid mirror it enclosed is gone.

The tide ebbed with rapidity: the waters within, retained by the embankment, poured through its two points an impetuous cataract, curling and boiling in innumerable eddies, and making a tumultuous melody admirably in unison with the surrounding scene. The three philosophers looked on in silence; and at length unwillingly turned away, and proceeded to the little town of Tremadoc, which is built on land recovered in a similar manner from the sea. After inspecting the manufactories, and refreshing themselves at the inn on a cold saddle of mutton and a bottle of sherry, they retraced their steps towards Headlong Hall, commenting as they went on the various objects they had seen.

MR. ESCOT.

I regret that time did not allow us to see the caves on the sea-shore. There is one of which the depth is said to be unknown. There is a tradition in the country, that an adventurous fiddler once resolved to explore it; that he entered, and never returned; but that the subterranean sound of a fiddle was heard at a farm-house seven miles inland. It is, therefore, concluded that he lost his way in the labyrinth of caverns, supposed to exist under the rocky soil of this part of the country.

MR. JENKISON.

A supposition that must always remain in force, unless

a second fiddler, equally adventurous and more successful, should return with an accurate report of the true state of the fact.

MR. FOSTER.

What think you of the little colony we have just been inspecting ; a city, as it were, in its cradle ?

MR. ESCOT.

With all the weakness of infancy, and all the vices of maturer age. I confess, the sight of those manufactories, which have suddenly sprung up, like fungous excrecences, in the bosom of these wild and desolate scenes, impressed me with as much horror and amazement as the sudden appearance of the stocking manufactory struck into the mind of Rousseau; when, in a lonely valley of the Alps, he had just congratulated himself on finding a spot where man had never been.

MR. FOSTER.

The manufacturing system is not yet purified from some evils which necessarily attend it, but which I conceive are greatly overbalanced by their concomitant advantages. Contemplate the vast sum of human industry to which this system so essentially contributes : seas covered with vessels, ports resounding with life, profound researches, scientific inventions, complicated mechanism, canals carried over deep valleys and through the bosoms of hills : employment and existence thus given to innumerable families, and the multiplied comforts and conveniences of life diffused over the whole community.

MR. ESCOT.

You present to me a complicated picture of artificial life, and require me to admire it. Seas covered with vessels : every one of which contains two or three tyrants, and from fifty to a thousand slaves, ignorant, gross, perverted, and active only in mischief. Ports resounding with life : in other words, with noise and drunkenness, the mingled din of avarice, intemperance, and prostitution. Profound researches, scientific inventions : to what end ? To contract the sum of human wants ? to teach the art of living on a

little? to disseminate independence, liberty, and health? No; to multiply factitious desires, to stimulate depraved appetites, to invent unnatural wants, to heap up incense on the shrine of luxury, and accumulate expedients of selfish and ruinous profusion. Complicated machinery: behold its blessings. Twenty years ago, at the door of every cottage sate the good woman with her spinning-wheel: the children, if not more profitably employed than in gathering heath and sticks, at least laid in a stock of health and strength to sustain the labours of maturer years. Where is the spinning-wheel now, and every simple and insulated occupation of the industrious cottager? Wherever this boasted machinery is established, the children of the poor are death-doomed from their cradles. Look for one moment at midnight into a cotton-mill, amidst the smell of oil, the smoke of lamps, the rattling of wheels, the dizzy and complicated motions of diabolical mechanism: contemplate the little human machines that keep play with the revolutions of the iron work, robbed at that hour of their natural rest, as of air and exercise by day: observe their pale and ghastly features, more ghastly in that baleful and malignant light, and tell me if you do not fancy yourself on the threshold of Virgil's hell, where

*Continuū auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,
Infantumque animæ fletus, in limine primo,
Quos dulcis vitæ exsortes, et ab ubere raptos,
Abstulit atra dies, et funere mersit acerbo!*

As Mr. Escot said this, a little rosy-cheeked girl, with a basket of heath on her head, came tripping down the side of one of the rocks on the left. The force of contrast struck even on the phlegmatic spirit of Mr. Jenkison, and he almost inclined for a moment to the doctrine of deterioration. Mr. Escot continued:

“Nor is the lot of the parents more enviable. Sedentary victims of unhealthy toil, they have neither the corporeal energy of the savage, nor the mental acquisitions of the civilised man. Mind, indeed, they have none, and scarcely animal life. They are mere automata, component parts of the enormous machines which administer to the pampered appetites of the few, who consider themselves the most

valuable portion of a state, because they consume in indolence the fruits of the earth, and contribute nothing to the benefit of the community.

MR. JENKISON.

That these are evils cannot be denied; but they have their counterbalancing advantages. That a man should pass the day in a furnace and the night in a cellar, is bad for the individual, but good for others who enjoy the benefit of his labour.

MR. ESCOT.

By what right do they so?

MR. JENKISON.

By the right of all property and all possession: *le droit du plus fort*.

MR. ESCOT.

Do you justify that principle?

MR. JENKISON.

I neither justify nor condemn it. It is practically recognised in all societies; and, though it is certainly the source of enormous evil, I conceive it is also the source of abundant good, or it would not have so many supporters.

MR. ESCOT.

That is by no means a consequence. Do we not every day see men supporting the most enormous evils, which they know to be so with respect to others, and which in reality are so with respect to themselves, though an erroneous view of their own miserable self-interest induces them to think otherwise?

MR. JENKISON.

Good and evil exist only as they are perceived. I cannot therefore understand, how that which a man perceives to be good can be in reality an evil to him: indeed, the word *reality* only signifies *strong belief*.

MR. ESCOT.

The views of such a man I contend are false. If he could be made to see the truth —

MR. JENKISON.

He sees his own truth. Truth is that which a man *throweth*. Where there is no man there is no truth. Thus the truth of one is not the truth of another.*

MR. ESCOT.

I am aware of the etymology ; but I contend that there is an universal and immutable truth, deducible from the nature of things.

MR. JENKISON.

By whom deducible? Philosophers have investigated the nature of things for centuries, yet no two of them will agree in *throwing* the same conclusion.

MR. FOSTER.

The progress of philosophical investigation, and the rapidly increasing accuracy of human knowledge, approximate by degrees the diversities of opinion ; so that, in process of time, moral science will be susceptible of mathematical demonstration ; and, clear and indisputable principles being universally recognised, the coincidence of deduction will necessarily follow.

MR. ESCOT.

Possibly, when the inroads of luxury and disease shall have exterminated nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine of every million of the human race, the remaining fractional units may congregate into one point, and come to something like the same conclusion.

MR. JENKISON.

I doubt it much. I conceive, if only we three were survivors of the whole system of terrestrial being, we should never agree in our decisions as to the cause of the calamity.

MR. ESCOT.

Be that as it may, I think you must at least assent to the following positions : that the many are sacrificed to the few ; that ninety-nine in a hundred are occupied in a perpetual struggle for the preservation of a perilous and precarious existence, while the remaining one wallows in all

* Tooke's Diversions of Purley.

the redundancies of luxury that can be wrung from their labours and privations ; that luxury and liberty are incompatible ; and that every new want you invent for civilised man is a new instrument of torture for him who cannot indulge it.

They had now regained the shores of the lake, when the conversation was suddenly interrupted by a tremendous explosion, followed by a violent splashing of water, and various sounds of tumult and confusion, which induced them to quicken their pace towards the spot whence they proceeded.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TOWER.

IN all the thoughts, words, and actions of Squire Headlong, there was a remarkable alacrity of progression, which almost annihilated the interval between conception and execution. He was utterly regardless of obstacles, and seemed to have expunged their very name from his vocabulary. His designs were never nipped in their infancy by the contemplation of those trivial difficulties which often turn awry the current of enterprise ; and, though the rapidity of his movements was sometimes arrested by a more formidable barrier, either naturally existing in the pursuit he had undertaken, or created by his own impetuosity, he seldom failed to succeed either in knocking it down or cutting his way through it. He had little idea of gradation : he saw no interval between the first step and the last, but pounced upon his object with the impetus of a mountain cataract. This rapidity of movement, indeed, subjected him to some disasters which cooler spirits would have escaped. He was an excellent sportsman, and almost always killed his game ; but now and then he killed his dog.* Rocks, streams,

* Some readers will, perhaps, recollect the Archbishop of Prague, who also was an excellent sportsman, and who,

Com' era scritto in certi suoi giornali,
Ucciso avea con le sue proprie mani

hedges, gates, and ditches, were objects of no account in his estimation; though a dislocated shoulder, several severe bruises, and two or three narrow 'escapes for his neck, might have been expected to teach him a certain degree of caution in effecting his transitions. He was so singularly alert in climbing precipices and traversing torrents, that, when he went out on a shooting party, he was very soon left to continue his sport alone, for he was sure to dash up or down some nearly perpendicular path, where no one else had either ability or inclination to follow. He had a pleasure boat on the lake, which he steered with amazing dexterity; but as he always indulged himself in the utmost possible latitude of sail, he was occasionally upset by a sudden gust, and was indebted to his skill in the art of swimming for the opportunity of tempering with a copious libation of wine the unnatural frigidity introduced into his stomach by the extraordinary intrusion of water, an element which he had religiously determined should never pass his lips, but of which, on these occasions, he was sometimes compelled to swallow no inconsiderable quantity. This circumstance alone, of the various disasters that befel him, occasioned him any permanent affliction, and he accordingly noted the day in his pocket book as a *dies nefastus*, with this simple abstract, and brief chronicle of the calamity: *Mem. Swallowed two or three pints of water*: without any notice whatever of the concomitant circumstances. These days, of which there were several, were set apart in Headlong Hall for the purpose of anniversary expiation; and, as often as the day returned on which the squire had swallowed water, he not only made a point of swallowing a treble allowance of wine himself, but imposed a heavy mulct on every one of his servants who should be detected in a state of sobriety after sunset: but their conduct on these occasions was so uniformly exemplary, that no instance of the infliction of the penalty appears on record.

Un numero infinito d'animali :
 Cinquemila con quindici fagiani,
 Seimila lepri, ottantatrè cignali,
 E per disgrazia, ancor tredici cani, &c.

The squire and Mr. Milestone, as we have already said, had set out immediately after breakfast to examine the capabilities of the scenery. The object that most attracted Mr. Milestone's admiration was a ruined tower on a projecting point of rock, almost totally overgrown with ivy. This ivy, Mr. Milestone observed, required trimming and clearing in various parts: a little pointing and polishing was also necessary for the dilapidated walls: and the whole effect would be materially increased by a plantation of spruce fir, interspersed with cypress and juniper, the present rugged and broken ascent from the land side being first converted into a beautiful slope, which might be easily effected by blowing up a part of the rock with gunpowder, laying on a quantity of fine mould, and covering the whole with an elegant stratum of turf.

Squire Headlong caught with avidity at this suggestion; and, as he had always a store of gunpowder in the house, for the accommodation of himself and his shooting visitors, and for the supply of a small battery of cannon, which he kept for his private amusement, he insisted on commencing operations immediately. Accordingly, he bounded back to the house, and very speedily returned, accompanied by the little butler, and half a dozen servants and labourers, with pickaxes and gunpowder, a hanging stove and a poker, together with a basket of cold meat and two or three bottles of Madeira: for the Squire thought, with many others, that a copious supply of provision is a very necessary ingredient in all rural amusements.

Mr. Milestone superintended the proceedings. The rock was excavated, the powder introduced, the apertures strongly blockaded with fragments of stone: a long train was laid to a spot which Mr. Milestone fixed on as sufficiently remote from the possibility of harm: the Squire seized the poker, and, after flourishing it in the air with a degree of dexterity which induced the rest of the party to leave him in solitary possession of an extensive circumference, applied the end of it to the train; and the rapidly communicated ignition ran hissing along the surface of the soil.

At this critical moment, Mr. Cranium and Mr. Panscope appeared at the top of the tower, which, unseeing and un-

seen, they had ascended on the opposite side to that where the Squire and Mr. Milestone were conducting their operations. Their sudden appearance a little dismayed the Squire, who, however, comforted himself with the reflection, that the tower was perfectly safe, or at least was intended to be so, and that his friends were in no probable danger but of a knock on the head from a flying fragment of stone.

The succession of these thoughts in the mind of the Squire was commensurate in rapidity to the progress of the ignition, which having reached its extremity, the explosion took place, and the shattered rock was hurled into the air in the midst of fire and smoke.

Mr. Milestone had properly calculated the force of the explosion; for the tower remained untouched: but the Squire, in his consolatory reflections, had omitted the consideration of the influence of sudden fear, which had so violent an effect on Mr. Cranium, who was just commencing a speech concerning the very fine prospect from the top of the tower, that, cutting short the thread of his observations, he bounded, under the elastic influence of terror, several feet into the air. His ascent being unluckily a little out of the perpendicular, he descended with a proportionate curve from the apex of his projection, and alighted, not on the wall of the tower, but in an ivy-bush by its side, which, giving way beneath him, transferred him to a tuft of hazel at its base, which, after upholding him an instant, consigned him to the boughs of an ash that had rooted itself in a fissure about half way down the rock, which finally transmitted him to the waters below.

Squire Headlong anxiously watched the tower as the smoke which at first enveloped it rolled away; but when this shadowy curtain was withdrawn, and Mr. Panscope was discovered, *solus*, in a tragical attitude, his apprehensions became boundless, and he concluded that the unlucky collision of a flying fragment of rock had indeed emancipated the spirit of the craniologist from its terrestrial bondage.

Mr. Escot had considerably outstripped his companions and arrived at the scene of the disaster just as Mr. Cranium, being utterly destitute of natatorial skill, was in imminent danger of final submersion. The deteriorationist, who had

cultivated this valuable art with great success, immediately plunged in to his assistance, and brought him alive and in safety to a shelving part of the shore. Their landing was hailed with a view-holla from the delighted Squire, who, shaking them both heartily by the hand, and making ten thousand lame apologies to Mr. Cranium, concluded by asking, in a pathetic tone, *How much water he had swallowed?* and without waiting for his answer, filled a large tumbler with Madeira, and insisted on his tossing it off, which was no sooner said than done. Mr. Jenkison and Mr. Foster now made their appearance. Mr. Panscope descended the tower, which he vowed never again to approach within a quarter of mile. The tumbler of Madeira was replenished, and handed round to recruit the spirits of the party, which now began to move towards Headlong Hall, the Squire capering for joy in the van, and the little fat butler waddling in the rear.

The Squire took care that Mr. Cranium should be seated next to him at dinner, and plied him so hard with Madeira to prevent him, as he said, from taking cold, that long before the ladies sent in their summons to coffee, every organ in his brain was in a complete state of revolution, and the Squire was under the necessity of ringing for three or four servants to carry him to bed, observing, with a smile of great satisfaction, that he was in a very excellent way for escaping any ill consequences that might have resulted from his accident.

The beautiful Cephalis, being thus freed from his *surveillance*, was enabled, during the course of the evening, to develope to his preserver the full extent of her gratitude.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SEXTON.

Mr. Escot passed a sleepless night, the ordinary effect of love, according to some amatory poets, who seem to have

composed their whining ditties for the benevolent purpose of bestowing on others that gentle slumber of which they so pathetically lament the privation. The deteriorationist entered into a profound moral soliloquy, in which he first examined *whether a philosopher ought to be in love?* Having decided this point affirmatively against Plato and Lucretius, he next examined, *whether that passion ought to have the effect of keeping a philosopher awake?* Having decided this negatively, he resolved to go to sleep immediately: not being able to accomplish this to his satisfaction, he tossed and tumbled, like Achilles or Orlando, first on one side, then on the other; repeated to himself several hundred lines of poetry; counted a thousand; began again, and counted another thousand: in vain: the beautiful Cephalis was the predominant image in all his soliloquies, in all his repetitions: even in the numerical process from which he sought relief, he did but associate the idea of number with that of his dear tormentor, till she appeared to his mind's eye in a thousand similitudes, distinct, not different. These thousand images, indeed, were but one; and yet the one was a thousand, a sort of uni-multiplex phantasma, which will be very intelligible to some understandings.

He arose with the first peep of day, and sallied forth to enjoy the balmy breeze of morning, which any but a lover might have thought too cool; for it was an intense frost, the sun had not risen, and the wind was rather fresh from north-east and by north. But a lover, who, like Ladurlad in the curse of Kehama, always has, or at least is supposed to have, "a fire in his heart and a fire in his brain," feels a wintry breeze from N. E. and by N. steal over his cheek like the south over a bank of violets: therefore, on walked the philosopher, with his coat unbuttoned and his hat in his hand, careless of whither he went, till he found himself near the enclosure of a little mountain-chapel. Passing through the wicket, and stepping over two or three graves, he stood on a rustic tombstone, and peeped through the chapel window, examining the interior with as much curiosity as if he had "forgotten what the inside of a church was made of," which, it is rather to be feared, was the case. Before him and beneath him were the font, the altar, and the grave; which gave rise to a train of moral reflections on

the three great epochs in the course of the *featherless biped*,—birth, marriage, and death. The middle stage of the process arrested his attention ; and his imagination placed before him several figures, which he thought, with the addition of his own, would make a very picturesque group ; the beautiful Cephalis, “arrayed in her bridal apparel of white ;” her friend Caprioletta officiating as bridesmaid ; Mr. Cranium giving her away ; and, last not least, the Reverend Doctor Gaster, intoning the marriage ceremony with the regular orthodox allowance of nasal recitative. Whilst he was feasting his eyes on this imaginary picture, the demon of mistrust insinuated himself into the storehouse of his conceptions, and, removing his figure from the group, substituted that of Mr. Panscope, which gave such a violent shock to his feelings, that he suddenly exclaimed, with an extraordinary elevation of voice, Οἱμοι κακοδαιμων, και τρις κακοδαιμων, και τετρακις, και πεντακις, και δωδεκακις, και μυριακις ! * to the great terror of the sexton, who was just entering the churchyard, and, not knowing from whence the voice proceeded, *pensa que fut un diabletean*. The sight of the philosopher dispelled his apprehensions, when, growing suddenly valiant, he immediately addressed him :—

“Cot pless your honour, I should n’t have thought of meeting any pody here at this time of the morning, except, look you, it was the tevil—who, to pe sure, toes not often come upon consecrated cround—put for all that, I think I have seen him now and then, in former tays, when old Nanny Llwyd of Llyn-isa was living—Cot teliver us ! a terriple old witch to pe sure she was—I tid n’t much like tiggig her crave—put I prought two cocks with me—the tevil hates cocks—and tid them py the leg on two tombstones—and I tug, and the cocks crowed, and the tevil kept at a tistance. To pe sure now, if I had n’t peen very prave py nature—as I ought to pe truly—for my father was Owen Ap-Llwyd Ap-Gryffydd Ap-Shenkin Ap-Williams Ap-Thomas Ap-Morgan Ap-Parry Ap-Evan Ap-Rhys, a coot preacher and a lover of *cwrw* †—I

* Me miserable ! and thrice miserable ! and four times, and five times, and twelve times, and ten thousand times miserable !

† Pronounced cooroo—the Welsh word for *ale*.

should have thought just now before I saw your honour, that the voice I heard was the devil's calling Nanny Llwyd — Cot pless us! to pe sure she should have been puried in the middle of the river, where the devil can't come, as your honour fery well knows."

"I am perfectly aware of it," said Mr. Escot.

"Truc, truc," continued the sexton; "put to pe sure, Owen Thomas of Morfa-Bach will have it that one summer evening — when he went over to Cwm Cynfael in Meirionnydd, apout some cattles he wanted to puy — he saw a strange figure — pless us! — with five horns! — Cot save us! sitting on Hugh Llwyd's pulpit, which, your honour fery well knows, is a pig rock in the middle of the river —"

"Of course he was mistaken," said Mr. Escot.

"To pe sure he was," said the sexton. "For there is no toubt put the devil, when Owen Thomas saw him, must have been sitting on a picee of rock in a straight line from him on the other side of the river, where he used to sit, look you, for a whole summer's tay, while Hugh Llwyd was on his pulpit, and there they used to talk across the water! for Hugh Llwyd, please your honour, never raised the devil except when he was safe in the middle of the river, which proves that Owen Thomas, in his fright, did n't pay proper attention to the exact spot where the devil was."

The sexton concluded his speech with an approving smile at his own sagacity, in so luminously expounding the nature of Owen Thomas's mistake.

"I perceive," said Mr. Escot, "you have a very deep insight into things, and can, therefore, perhaps, facilitate the resolution of a question, concerning which, though I have little doubt on the subject, I am desirous of obtaining the most extensive and accurate information."

The sexton scratched his head, the language of Mr. Escot not being to his apprehension quite so luminous as his own.

"You have been sexton here," continued Mr. Escot, in the language of Hamlet, "man and ooy, forty years."

The sexton turned pale. The period Mr. Escot named

was so nearly the true one, that he began to suspect the personage before him of being rather too familiar with Hugh Llwyd's sable visitor. Recovering himself a little, he said, "Why, thereapouts, sure enough."

"During this period, you have of course dug up many bones of the people of ancient times."

"Pones ! Cot pless you, yes ! pones as old as the 'orlt."

"Perhaps you can show me a few."

The sexton grinned horribly a ghastly smile. "Will you take your Pible oath you ton't want them to raise the tevil with?"

"Willingly," said Mr. Escot, smiling; "I have an abstruse reason for the inquiry."

"Why, if you have an *obtuse* reason," said the sexton, who thought this a good opportunity to show that he could pronounce hard words as well as other people; "if you have an *obtuse* reason, that alters the case."

So saying he led the way to the bone-house, from which he began to throw out various bones and skulls of more than common dimensions, and amongst them a skull of very extraordinary magnitude, which he swore by St. David was the skull of Cadwallader.

"How do you know this to be his skull?" said Mr. Escot.

"He was the piggest man that ever lived, and he was puried here; and this is the piggest skull I ever found: you sec now——"

"Nothing can be more logical," said Mr. Escot. "My good friend, will you allow me to take this skull away with me?"

"St. Winifred pless us!" exclaimed the sexton:—"would you have me haunted py his chost for taking his plessed pones out of consecrated croud? Would you have him come in the tead of the night, and fly away with the roof of my louse? Would you have all the crop of my carden come to nothing? for, look you, his epitaph says,

"He that my pones shall ill pestow,
Leek in his croud shall never crotw."

"You will ill bestow them," said Mr. Escot, "in confounding them with those of the sons of little men, the degenerate dwarfs of later generations: you will well bestow them in giving them to me; for I will have this illustrious skull bound with a silver rim, and filled with mantling wine, with this inscription, *NUNC TANDEM*: signifying that that pernicious liquor has at length found its proper receptacle; for, when the wine is in, the brain is out."

Saying these words, he put a dollar into the hands of the sexton, who instantly stood spell-bound by the talismanic influence of the coin, while Mr. Escot walked off in triumph with the skull of Cadwallader.

CHAPTER X.

THE SKULL.

WHEN Mr. Escot entered the breakfast-room he found the majority of the party assembled, and the little butler very active at his station. Several of the ladies shrieked at the sight of the skull; and Miss Tenorina, starting up in great haste and terror, caused the subversion of a cup of chocolate, which a servant was handing to the Reverend Doctor Gaster, into the nape of the neck of Sir Patrick O'Prism. Sir Patrick, rising impetuously, *to clap an extinguisher*, as he expressed himself, *on the farthing rushlight of the rascal's life*, pushed over the chair of Marmaduke Milestone, Esquire, who, catching for support at the first thing that came in his way, which happened unluckily to be the corner of the table-cloth, drew it instantaneously with him to the floor, involving plates, cups and saucers, in one promiscuous ruin. But, as the principal *matériel* of the breakfast apparatus was on the little butler's side-table, the confusion occasioned by this accident was happily greater than the damage. Miss Tenorina was so agitated that she was obliged to retire: Miss Graziosa accompanied her through pure sisterly affection and sympathy, not without a

lingering look at Sir Patrick, who likewise retired to change his coat, but was very expeditious in returning to resume his attack on the cold partridge. The broken cups were cleared away, the cloth relaid, and the array of the table restored with wonderful celerity.

Mr. Escot was a little surprised at the scene of confusion which signalised his entrance; but, perfectly unconscious that it originated with the skull of Cadwallader, he advanced to seat himself at the table by the side of the beautiful Cephalis, first placing the skull in a corner, out of the reach of Mr. Cranium, who sate eyeing it with lively curiosity, and after several efforts to restrain his impatience, exclaimed, "You seem to have found a rarity."

"A rarity indeed," said Mr. Escot, cracking an egg as he spoke; "no less than the genuine and indubitable skull of Cadwallader."

"The skull of Cadwallader!" vociferated Mr. Cranium: "O treasure of treasures!"

Mr. Escot then detailed by what means he had become possessed of it, which gave birth to various remarks from the other individuals of the party; after which, rising from table, and taking the skull again in his hand,

"This skull," said he, "is the skull of a hero, παλαι κατὰτεθνεωτος*, and sufficiently demonstrates a point, concerning which I never myself entertained a doubt, that the human race is undergoing a gradual process of diminution in length, breadth, and thickness. Observe this skull. Even the skull of our reverend friend, which is the largest and thickest in the company, is not more than half its size. The frame this skull belonged to could scarcely have been less than nine feet high. Such is the lamentable progress of degeneracy and decay. In the course of ages, a boot of the present generation would form an ample chateau for a large family of our remote posterity. The mind, too, participates in the contraction of the body. Poets and philosophers of all ages and nations have lamented this too visible process of physical and moral deterioration. 'The sons of little men,' says Ossian. 'Οιοι νυν βροτοι εισιν,' says Homer: 'such men as live in these degenerate days.'

* Long since dead.

‘All things,’ says Virgil *, ‘have a retrocessive tendency, and grow worse and worse by the inevitable doom of fate.’ ‘We live in the ninth age,’ says Juvenal †, ‘an age worse than the age of iron; nature has no metal sufficiently pernicious to give a denomination to its wickedness.’ ‘Our fathers,’ says Horace ‡, ‘worse than our grandfathers, have given birth to us, their more vicious progeny, who, in our turn, shall become the parents of a still viler generation.’ You all know the fable of the buried Piet, who bit off the end of a pickaxe, with which sacrilegious hands were breaking open his grave, and called out with a voice like subterranean thunder, *I perceive the degeneracy of your race by the smallness of your little finger!* videlicet, the pickaxe. This, to be sure, is a fiction; but it shows the prevalent opinion, the feeling, the conviction, of absolute, universal, irremediable deterioration.”

“I should be sorry,” said Mr. Foster, “that such an opinion should become universal, independently of my conviction of its fallacy. Its general admission would tend, in a great measure, to produce the very evils it appears to lament. What could be its effect, but to check the ardour of investigation, to extinguish the zeal of philanthropy, to freeze the current of enterprising hope, to bury in the torpor of scepticism and in the stagnation of despair, every better faculty of the human mind, which will necessarily become retrograde in ceasing to be progressive?”

“I am inclined to think, on the contrary,” said Mr. Escot, “that the deterioration of man is accelerated by his blindness—in many respects wilful blindness—to the truth of the fact itself, and to the causes which produce it; that there is no hope whatever of ameliorating his condition but in a total and radical change of the whole scheme of human life, and that the advocates of his indefinite perfectibility are in reality the greatest enemies to the practical possibility of their own system, by so strenuously labouring to impress on his attention that he is going on in a good way, while he is really in a deplorably bad one.”

“I admit,” said Mr. Foster, “there are many things that *may*, and therefore will, be changed for the better.”

* Georg. 1. 199.

† Sat. X111. 28.

‡ Carm. 111. 6. 46.

"Not on the present system," said Mr. Escot, "in which every change is for the worse."

"In matters of taste I am sure it is," said Mr. Gall: "there is, in fact, no such thing as good taste left in the world."

"O, Mr. Gall!" said Miss Philomela Poppyseed, "I thought my novel——"

"My paintings," said Sir Patrick O'Prism——

"My ode," said Mr. Mac Laurel——

"My ballad," said Mr. Nightshade——

"My plan for Lord Littlebrain's park," said Marmaduke Milestone, Esquire——

"My essay," said Mr. Treacle——

"My sonata," said Mr. Chromatic——

"My claret," said Squire Headlong——

"My lectures," said Mr. Cranium——

"Vanity of vanities," said the Reverend Doctor Gaster, turning down an empty egg-shell; "all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

CHAPTER XI.

THE ANNIVERSARY.

AMONG the *dies albâ cretâ notandos*, which the beau monde of the Cambrian mountains was in the habit of remembering with the greatest pleasure, and anticipating with the most lively satisfaction, was the Christmas ball which the ancient family of the Headlongs had been accustomed to give from time immemorial. Tradition attributed the honour of its foundation to Headlong Ap-Headlong Ap-Breakneck Ap-Headlong Ap-Cataract Ap-Pistyll* Ap-Rhaidr Ap-Headlong, who lived about the time of the Trojan war. Certain it is, at least, that a grand chorus was always sung after supper in honour of this illustrious ancestor of the squire. This ball was, indeed, an æra in the lives of all the beauty

* Pistyll, in Welch, signifies a cataract, and Rhaidr a cascade.

and fashion of Cae-narvon, Meirionnydd, and Anglesea, and, like the Greek Olympiads and the Roman consulates, served as the main pillar of memory, round which all the events of the year were suspended and entwined. Thus, in recalling to mind any circumstance imperfectly recollected, the principal point to be ascertained was, whether it had occurred in the year of the first, second, third, or fourth ball of Headlong Ap-Breakneck, or Headlong Ap-Torrent, or Headlong Ap-Hurricane; and, this being satisfactorily established, the remainder followed of course in the natural order of its ancient association.

This eventful anniversary being arrived, every chariot, coach, barouche, and barouchette, landau and landaulet, chaise, curricie, buggy, whiskey, and tilbury, of the three counties, was in motion: not a horse was left idle within five miles of any gentleman's seat, from the high-mettled hunter to the heath-cropping galloway. The ferrymen of the Menai were at their stations before day-break, taking a double allowance of rum and *curru* to strengthen them for the fatigues of the day. The ivied towers of Caernarvon, the romantic woods of Tan-y-bwlch, the heathy hills of Kernioggau, the sandy shores of Tremadoc, the mountain recesses of Bedd-Gelert, and the lonely lakes of Capel-Cerig, re-echoed to the voices of the delighted ostlers and postillions, who reaped on this happy day their wintry harvest. Landlords and landladies, waiters, chambermaids, and toll-gate keepers, roused themselves from the torpidity which the last solitary tourist, flying with the yellow leaves on the wings of the autumnal wind, had left them to enjoy till the returning spring: the bustle of August was renewed on all the mountain roads, and, in the meanwhile, Squire Headlong and his little fat butler carried most energetically into effect the lessons of the *savant* in the Court of Quintessence, *qui par engin mirifique jectoit les maisons par les fenestres*.*

It was the custom for the guests to assemble at dinner on the day of the ball, and depart on the following morning after breakfast. Sleep during this interval was out of the question: the ancient harp of Cambria suspended the cele-

* Rabclais.

bration of the noble race of Shenkin, and the songs of Hoel and Cyveilioc, to ring to the profaner but more lively modulation of *Voulez vous danser, Mademoiselle?* in conjunction with the symphonious scraping of fiddles, the tinkling of triangles, and the beating of tambourines. Conrus and Momus were the deities of the night; and Bacchus of course was not forgotten by the male part of the assembly (with them, indeed, a ball was invariably a scene of "*tipsy dance and jollity*"): the servants flew about with wine and negus, and the little butler was indefatigable with his cork-screw, which is reported on one occasion to have grown so hot under the influence of perpetual friction that it actually set fire to the cork.

The company assembled. The dinner, which on this occasion was a secondary object, was despatched with uncommon celerity. When the cloth was removed, and the bottle had taken its first round, Mr. Cranium stood up and addressed the company.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said he, "the golden key of mental phenomena, which has lain buried for ages in the deepest vein of the mine of physiological research, is now, by a happy combination of practical and speculative investigations, grasped, if I may so express myself, firmly and inexcussibly, in the hands of physiognomical empiricism." The Cambrian visitors listened with profound attention, not comprehending a single syllable he said, but concluding he would finish his speech by proposing the health of Squire Headlong. The gentlemen accordingly tossed off their hielcups, and Mr. Cranium proceeded: "Ardently desirous, to the extent of my feeble capacity, of disseminating, as much as possible, the inexhaustible treasures to which this golden key admits the humblest votary of philosophical truth, I invite you, when you have sufficiently restored, replenished, refreshed, and exhilarated that osteosarchæmatosplanchnochondroneuromuelous, or to employ a more intelligible term, osseocarnisanguineoviscericartilaginonervomedullary, *compages*, or shell, the body, which at once envelopes and develops that mysterious and inestimable kernel, the desiderative, determinative, ratiocinative, imaginative, inquisitive, appetitive, comparative, reminiscent,

congeries of ideas and notions, simple and compound, comprised in the comprehensive denomination of mind, to take a peep with me into the mechanical arcana of the anatomico-metaphysical universe. Being not in the least dubitative of your spontaneous compliance, I proceed," added he, suddenly changing his tone, "to get every thing ready in the library." Saying these words, he vanished.

The Welsh squires now imagined they had caught a glimpse of his meaning, and set him down in their minds for a sort of gentleman conjuror, who intended to amuse them before the ball with some tricks of legerdemain. Under this impression, they became very impatient to follow him, as they had made up their minds not to be drunk before supper. The ladies, too, were extremely curious to witness an exhibition which had been announced in so singular a preamble; and the squire, having previously insisted on every gentleman tossing off a half-pint bumper, adjourned the whole party to the library, where they were not a little surprised to discover Mr. Cranium seated, in a pensive attitude, at a large table, decorated with a copious variety of skulls.

Some of the ladies were so much shocked at this extraordinary display, that a scene of great confusion ensued. Fans were very actively exercised, and water was strenuously called for by some of the most officious of the gentlemen; on which the little butler entered with a large allowance of liquid, which bore, indeed, the name of *water*, but was in reality a very powerful spirit. This was the only species of water which the little butler had ever heard called for in Headlong Hall. The mistake was not attended with any evil effects: for the fluid was no sooner applied to the lips of the fainting fair ones, than it resuscitated them with an expedition truly miraculous.

Order was at length restored; the audience took their seats; and the craniological orator held forth in the following terms:—

CHAPTER XII.

THE LECTURE.

“PHYSIOLOGISTS have been much puzzled to account for the varieties of moral character in men, as well as for the remarkable similarity of habit and disposition in all the individual animals of every other respective species. A few brief sentences, perspicuously worded, and scientifically arranged, will enumerate all the characteristics of a lion, or a tiger, or a wolf, or a bear, or a squirrel, or a goat, or a horse, or an ass, or a rat, or a cat, or a hog, or a dog; and whatever is physiologically predicated of any individual lion, tiger, wolf, bear, squirrel, goat, horse, ass, hog, or dog, will be found to hold true of all lions, tigers, wolves, bears, squirrels, goats, horses, asses, hogs, and dogs, whatsoever. Now, in man, the very reverse of this appears to be the case; for he has so few distinct and characteristic marks which hold true of all his species, that philosophers in all ages have found it a task of infinite difficulty to give him a definition. Hence one has defined him to be a *featherless biped*, a definition which is equally applicable to an unfledged fowl: another, to be *an animal which forms opinions*, than which nothing can be more inaccurate, for a very small number of the species form opinions, and the remainder take them upon trust, without investigation or inquiry.

Again, man has been defined to be *an animal that carries a stick*: an attribute which undoubtedly belongs to man only, but not to all men always; though it uniformly characterises some of the graver and more imposing varieties, such as physicians, oran-outangs, and lords in waiting.

“We cannot define man to be a reasoning animal, for we do not dispute that idiots are men; to say nothing of that very numerous description of persons who consider themselves reasoning animals, and are so denominated by the ironical courtesy of the world, who labour, neverthe-

less, under a very gross delusion in that essential particular.

"It appears to me, that man may be correctly defined an animal, which, without, any peculiar or distinguishing faculty of its own, is, as it were, a bundle or compound of faculties of other animals, by a distinct enumeration of which any individual of the species may be satisfactorily described. This is manifest, even in the ordinary language of conversation, when, in summing up, for example, the qualities of an accomplished courtier, we say he has the vanity of a peacock, the cunning of a fox, the treachery of an hyæna, the cold-heartedness of a cat, and the servility of a jackall. That this is perfectly consentaneous to scientific truth, will appear in the further progress of these observations.

"Every particular faculty of the mind has its corresponding organ in the brain. In proportion as any particular faculty or propensity acquires paramount activity in any individual, these organs develope themselves, and their developement becomes externally obvious by corresponding lumps and bumps, exuberances and protuberances, on the osseous compages of the occiput and sinciput. In all animals but man, the same organ is equally developed in every individual of the species: for instance, that of migration in the swallow, that of destruction in the tiger, that of architecture in the beaver, and that of parental affection in the bear. The human brain, however, consists, as I have said, of a bundle or compound of all the faculties of all other animals; and from the greater developement of one or more of these, in the infinite varieties of combination, result all the peculiarities of individual character.

"Here is the skull of a beaver, and that of Sir Christopher Wren. You observe, in both these specimens, the prodigious developement of the organ of constructiveness.

"Here is the skull of a bullfinch, and that of an eminent fiddler. You may compare the organ of music.

"Here is the skull of a tiger. You observe the organ of carnage. Here is the skull of a fox. You observe the organ of plunder. Here is the skull of a peacock. You observe the organ of vanity. Here is the skull of an illustrious robber,

who, after a long and triumphant process of depredation and murder, was suddenly checked in his career by means of a certain quality inherent in preparations of hemp, which, for the sake of perspicuity, I shall call *suspensiveness*. Here is the skull of a conqueror, who, after over-running several kingdoms, burning a number of cities, and causing the deaths of two or three millions of men, women, and children, was entombed with all the pageantry of public lamentation, and figured as the hero of several thousand odes and a round dozen of epics; while the poor highway-man was twice executed —

“ At the gallows first, and after in a ballad,
Sung to a villanous tune.”

You observe, in both these skulls, the combined development of the organs of carnage, plunder, and vanity, which I have separately pointed out in the tiger, the fox, and the peacock. The greater enlargement of the organ of vanity in the hero is the only criterion by which I can distinguish them from each other. Born with the same faculties, and the same propensities, these two men were formed by nature to run the same career: the different combinations of external circumstances decided the differences of their destinies.

“ Here is the skull of a Newfoundland dog. You observe the organ of benevolence, and that of attachment. Here is a human skull, in which you may observe a very striking negation of both these organs; and an equally striking development of those of destruction, cunning, avarice, and self-love. This was one of the most illustrious statesmen that ever flourished in the page of history.

“ Here is the skull of a turnspit, which, after a wretched life of *dirty work*, was turned out of doors to die on a dunghill. I have been induced to preserve it, in consequence of its remarkable similarity to this, which belonged to a courtly poet, who having grown grey in flattering the great, was cast off in the same manner to perish by the same catastrophe.”

After these, and several other illustrations, during which

the skulls were handed round for the inspection of the company, Mr. Cranium proceeded thus :—

“ It is obvious, from what I have said, that no man can hope for worldly honour or advancement, who is not placed in such a relation to external circumstances as may be consentaneous to his peculiar cerebral organs ; and I would advise every parent, who has the welfare of his son at heart, to procure as extensive a collection as possible of the skulls of animals, and, before determining on the choice of a profession, to compare with the utmost nicety their bumps and protuberances with those of the skull of his son. If the development of the organ of destruction point out a similarity between the youth and the tiger, let him be brought to some profession (whether that of a butcher, a soldier, or a physician, may be regulated by circumstances) in which he may be furnished with a licence to kill : as, without such licence, the indulgence of his natural propensity may lead to the untimely rescission of his vital thread, ‘ with edge of penny cord and vile reproach.’ If he show an analogy with the jackal, let all possible influence be used to procure him a place at court, where he will infallibly thrive. If his skull bear a marked resemblance to that of a magpie, it cannot be doubted that he will prove an admirable lawyer ; and if with this advantageous conformation be combined any similitude to that of an owl, very confident hopes may be formed of his becoming a judge.”

A furious flourish of music was now heard from the ball-room, the squire having secretly despatched the little butler to order it to strike up, by way of a hint to Mr. Cranium to finish his harangue. The company took the hint and adjourned tumultuously, having just understood as much of the lecture as furnished them with amusement for the ensuing twelvemonth, in feeling the skulls of all their acquaintances.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BALL.

THE ball-room was adorned with great taste and elegance, under the direction of Miss Caprioletta and her friend Miss Cephalis, who were themselves its most beautiful ornaments, even though romantic Meirion, the pre-eminent in loveliness, sent many of its loveliest daughters to grace the festive scene. Numberless were the solicitations of the dazzled swains of Cambria for the honour of the two first dances with the one or the other of these fascinating friends ; but little availed, on this occasion, the pedigree lineally traced from Caractacus or King Arthur : their two philosophical lovers, neither of whom could have given the least account of his great-great-grandfather, had engaged them many days before. Mr. Panscope chafed and fretted like Llugwy in his bed of rocks, when the object of his adoration stood up with his rival : but he consoled himself with a lively damsel from the vale of Edeirnion, having first compelled Miss Cephalis to promise him her hand for the fourth set.

The ball was accordingly opened by Miss Caprioletta and Mr. Foster, which gave rise to much speculation among the Welsh gentry, as to who this Mr. Foster could be ; some of the more learned among them secretly resolving to investigate most profoundly the antiquity of the name of Foster, and ascertain what right a person so denominated could have to open the most illustrious of all possible balls with the lovely Caprioletta Headlong, the only sister of Harry Headlong, Esquire, of Headlong Hall, in the Vale of Llanberris, the only surviving male representative of the antediluvian family of Headlong Ap-Rhaiader.

When the two first dances were ended, Mr. Escot, who did not choose to dance with any one but his adorable Cephalis, looking round for a convenient seat, discovered Mr. Jenkison in a corner by the side of the Reverend

Doctor Gaster, who was keeping excellent time with his nose to the lively melody of the harp and fiddle. Mr. Escot seated himself by the side of Mr. Jenkison, and inquired if he took no part in the amusement of the night?

MR. JENKISON.

No. The universal cheerfulness of the company induces me to rise; the trouble of such violent exercise induces me to sit still. Did I see a young lady in want of a partner, gallantry would incite me to offer myself as her devoted knight for half an hour: but, as I perceive there are enough without me, that motive is null. I have been weighing these points *pro* and *con*, and remain *in statu quo*.

MR. ESCOT.

I have danced, contrary to my system, as I have done many other things since I have been here, from a motive that you will easily guess. (*Mr. Jenkison smiled.*) I have great objections to dancing. The wild and original man is a calm and contemplative animal. The stings of natural appetite alone rouse him to action. He satisfies his hunger with roots and fruits, unvitiated by the malignant adhibition of fire, and all its diabolical processes of elixion and assation: he slakes his thirst in the mountain-stream, *συμμισγεται τη επιτυχουση*, and returns to his peaceful state of meditative repose.

MR. JENKISON.

Like the metaphysical statue of Condillac.

MR. ESCOT.

With all its senses and purely natural faculties developed, certainly. Imagine this tranquil and passionless being, occupied in his first meditation on the simple question of *Wherc am I? Whence do I come? And what is the end of my existence?* Then suddenly place before him a chandelier, a fiddler, and a magnificent beau in silk stockings and pumps, bounding, skipping, swinging, capering, and throwing himself into ten thousand attitudes, till his face glows with fever, and distils with perspiration: the

first impulse excited in his mind by such an apparition will be that of violent fear, which, by the reiterated perception of its harmlessness, will subside into simple astonishment. Then let any genius, sufficiently powerful to impress on his mind all the terms of the communication, impart to him, that after a long process of ages, when his race shall have attained what some people think proper to denominate a very advanced stage of perfectibility, the most favoured and distinguished of the community shall meet by hundreds, to grin, and labour, and gesticulate, like the phantasma before him, from sunset to sunrise, while all nature is at rest, and that they shall consider this a happy and pleasurable mode of existence, and furnishing the most delightful of all possible contrasts to what they will call his vegetative state: would he not groan from his inmost soul for the lamentable condition of his posterity?

MR. JENKISON.

I know not what your wild and original man might think of the matter in the abstract; but comparatively, I conceive, he would be better pleased with the vision of such a scene as this, than with that of a party of Indians (who would have all the advantage of being nearly as wild as himself), dancing their infernal war-dance round a midnight fire in a North American forest.

MR. ESCOT.

Not if you should impart to him the true nature of both, by laying open to his view the springs of action in both parties.

MR. JENKISON.

To do this with effect, you must make him a profound metaphysician, and thus transfer him at once from his wild and original state to a very advanced stage of intellectual progression; whether that progression be towards good or evil, I leave you and our friend Foster to settle between you.

MR. ESCOT.

I wish to make no change in his habits and feelings, but to give him, hypothetically, so much mental illumination, as will enable him to take a clear view of two distinct

stages of the deterioration of his posterity, that he may be enabled to compare them with each other, and with his own more happy condition. The Indian, dancing round the midnight fire, is very far deteriorated; but the magnificent beau, dancing to the light of chandeliers, is infinitely more so. The Indian is a hunter: he makes great use of fire, and subsists almost entirely on animal food. The malevolent passions that spring from these pernicious habits involve him in perpetual war. He is, therefore, necessitated, for his own preservation, to keep all the energies of his nature in constant activity: to this end his midnight war-dance is very powerfully subservient, and, though in itself a frightful spectacle, is at least justifiable on the iron plea of necessity.

MR. JENKISON.

On the same iron plea, the modern system of dancing is more justifiable. The Indian dances to prepare himself for killing his enemy: but while the beaux and belles of our assemblies dance, they are in the very act of killing theirs — TIME! — a more inveterate and formidable foe than any the Indian has to contend with; for, however completely and ingeniously killed, he is sure to rise again, “with twenty mortal murders on his crown,” leading his army of blue devils, with ennui in the van, and vapours in the rear.

MR. ESCOT.

Your observation militates on my side of the question; and it is a strong argument in favour of the Indian, that he has no such enemy to kill.

MR. JENKISON.

There is certainly a great deal to be said against dancing: there is also a great deal to be said in its favour. The first side of the question I leave for the present to you: on the latter, I may venture to allege that no amusement seems more natural and more congenial to youth than this. It has the advantage of bringing young persons of both sexes together, in a manner which its publicity renders perfectly unexceptionable, enabling them to see and know each other better than, perhaps, any other

mode of general association *Tête-à-têtes* are dangerous things. Small family parties are too much under mutual observation. A ball-room appears to me almost the only scene uniting that degree of rational and innocent liberty of intercourse, which it is desirable to promote as much as possible between young persons, with that scrupulous attention to the delicacy and propriety of female conduct, which I consider the fundamental basis of all our most valuable social relations.

MR. ESCOT.

There would be some plausibility in your argument, if it were not the very essence of this species of intercourse to exhibit them to each other under false colours. Here all is show, and varnish, and hypocrisy, and coquetry; they dress up their moral character for the evening at the same toilet where they manufacture their shapes and faces. Ill-temper lies buried under a studied accumulation of smiles. Envy, hatred, and malice, retreat from the countenance, to entrench themselves more deeply in the heart. Treachery lurks under the flowers of courtesy. Ignorance and folly take refuge in that unmeaning gabble which it would be profanation to call language, and which even those whom long experience in "the dreary intercourse of daily life" has screwed up to such a pitch of stoical endurance that they can listen to it by the hour, have branded with the ignominious appellation of "*small talk*." Small indeed! — the absolute minimum of the infinitely little.

MR. JENKISON.

Go on. I have said all I intended to say on the favourable side. I shall have great pleasure in hearing you balance the argument.

MR. ESCOT.

I expect you to confess that I shall have more than balanced it. A ball-room is an epitome of all that is most worthless and unamiable in the great sphere of human life. Every petty and malignant passion is called into play. Coquetry is perpetually on the alert to captivate, caprice to mortify, and vanity to take offence. One amiable female is rendered miserable for the evening by seeing

another, whom she intended to outshine, in a more attractive dress than her own ; while the other omits no method of giving stings to her triumph, which she enjoys with all the secret arrogance of an oriental sultana. Another is compelled to dance with a *monster* she abhors. A third has set her heart on dancing with a particular partner, perhaps for the amiable motive of annoying one of her *dear friends* : not only he does not ask her, but she sees him dancing with that identical *dear friend*, whom from that moment she hates more cordially than ever. Perhaps, what is worse than all, she has set her heart on refusing some impertinent fop, who does not give her the opportunity.— As to the men, the case is very nearly the same with them. To be sure, they have the privilege of making the first advances, and are, therefore, less liable to have an odious partner forced upon them ; though this sometimes happens, as I know by woful experience : but it is seldom they can procure the very partner they prefer ; and when they do, the absurd necessity of changing every two dances forces them away, and leaves them only the miserable alternative of taking up with something disagreeable perhaps in itself, and at all events rendered so by contrast, or of retreating into some solitary corner, to vent their spleen on the first idle coxcomb they can find.

MR. JENKISON.

I hope that is not the motive which brings you to me.

MR. ESCOT.

Clearly not. But the most afflicting consideration of all is, that these malignant and miserable feelings are masked under that uniform disguise of pretended benevolence, *that fine and delicate irony, called politeness, which gives so much ease and pliability to the mutual intercourse of civilised man, and enables him to assume the appearance of every virtue, without the reality of one.**

The second set of dances was now terminated, and Mr. Escot flew off to reclaim the hand of the beautiful Cephalis, with whom he figured away with surprising alacrity, and probably felt at least as happy among the chandeliers and

* Rousseau, Discours sur les Sciences.

silk stockings, at which he had just been railing, as he would have been in an American forest, making one in an Indian ring, by the light of a blazing fire, even though his hand had been locked in that of the most beautiful *squaw* that ever listened to the roar of Niagara.

Squire Headlong was now beset by his maiden aunt, Miss Brindle-mew Grimalkin Phoebe Tabitha Ap-Headlong, on one side, and Sir Patrick O'Prism on the other; the former insisting that he should immediately procure her a partner; the latter earnestly requesting the same interference in behalf of Miss Philomela Poppysced. The squire thought to emancipate himself from his two petitioners by making them dance with each other; but Sir Patrick vehemently pleading a prior engagement, the squire threw his eyes around till they alighted on Mr. Jenkison and the Reverend Doctor Gaster; both of whom, after waking the latter, he pressed into the service. The doctor, arising with a strange kind of guttural sound, which was half a yawn and half a groan, was handed by the officious squire to Miss Philomela, who received him with sullen dignity: she had not yet forgotten his falling asleep during the first chapter of her novel, while she was condescending to detail to him the outlines of four superlative volumes. The doctor, on his part, had most completely forgotten it; and though he thought there was something in her physiognomy rather more forbidding than usual, he gave himself no concern about the cause, and had not the least suspicion that it was at all connected with himself. Miss Brindle-mew was very well contented with Mr. Jenkison, and gave him two or three ogles, accompanied by a most risible distortion of the countenance which she intended for a captivating smile. As to Mr. Jenkison, it was all one to him with whom he danced, or whether he danced or not: he was therefore just as well pleased as if he had been left alone in his corner; which is probably more than could have been said of any other human being under similar circumstances.

At the end of the third set, supper was announced; and the party, pairing off like turtles, adjourned to the supper-

room. The squire was now the happiest of mortal men' and the little butler the most laborious. The centre of the largest table was decorated with a model of Snowdon, surmounted with an enormous artificial leek, the leaves of angelica, and the bulb of blanc-mange. A little way from the summit was a tarn, or mountain-pool, supplied through concealed tubes with an inexhaustible flow of milk-punch, which, dashing in cascades down the miniature rocks, fell into the more capacious lake below, washing the mimic foundations of Headlong Hall. The reverend doctor handed Miss Philomela to the chair most conveniently situated for enjoying this interesting scene, protesting he had never before been sufficiently impressed with the magnificence of that mountain, which he now perceived to be well worthy of all the fame it had obtained.

"Now, when they had eaten and were satisfied," Squire Headlong called on Mr. Chromatic for a song; who, with the assistance of his two accomplished daughters, regaled the ears of the company with the following

TERZETTO.*

Grey Twilight, from her shadowy hill,
Discolours Nature's vernal bloom,
And sheds on grove, and field, and rill,
One placid tint of deepening gloom.

The sailor sighs 'mid shoreless seas,
Touched by the thought of friends afar,
As, fanned by ocean's flowing breeze,
He gazes on the western star.

The wanderer hears, in pensive dream,
The accents of the last farewell,
As, pausing by the mountain stream,
He listens to the evening bell.

This terzetto was of course much applauded; Mr. Milestone observing, that he thought the figure in the last verse would have been more picturesque, if it had been represented with its arms folded and its back against a tree; or leaning on its staff, with a cockle-shell in its hat, like a pilgrim of ancient times.

Mr. Chromatic professed himself astonished that a gentleman of genuine modern taste, like Mr. Milestone, should consider the words of a song of any consequence whatever,

* Imitated from a passage in the *Purgatorio* of Dante.

seeing that they were at the best only a species of pegs, for the more convenient suspension of crochets and quavers. This remark drew on him a very severe reprimand from Mr. Mac Laurel, who said to him, "Dinna ye ken, sir, that soond is a thing utterly worthless in itsel, and only effectual in agreable excitements, as far as it is an aicho to sence? Is there ony soond mair meeserable an' peeti-fu' than the scrape o' a fiddle, when it does na touch ony chord i' the human sensorium? Is there ony mair divine than the deep note o' a bagpipe, when it breathes the auncient meelodies o' leebeerty an' love? It is true, there are peculiar trains o' feeling an' sentiment, which partecular combinations o' meelody are calculated to excite; an' sae far music can produce its effect without words: but it does na follow, that, when ye put words to it, it becomes a matter of indifference what they are; for a gude strain of impassioned poetry will greatly increase the effect, and a tessuc o' nonsensical doggrel will destroy it a' thegither. Noo, as gude poetry can produce its effect without music, sae will gude music without poetry; and as gude music will be mair pooerfu' by itsel' than wi' bad poetry, sae will gude poetry than wi' bad music: but, when ye put gude music an' gude poetry thegither, ye produce the divinest compound o' sentimental harmony that can possibly find its way through the lug to the saul."

Mr. Chromatic admitted that there was much justice in these observations, but still maintained the subserviency of poetry to music. Mr. Mac Laurel as strenuously maintained the contrary; and a furious war of words was proceeding to perilous lengths, when the squire interposed his authority towards the reproduction of peace, which was forthwith concluded, and all animosities drowned in a libation of milk-punch, the Reverend Doctor Gaster officiating as high priest on the occasion.

Mr. Chromatic now requested Miss Caprioletta to favour the company with an air. The young lady immediately complied, and sung the following simple

BALLAD.

"O Mary, my sister, thy sorrow give o'er,
I soon shall return, girl, and leave thee no more:
But with children so fair, and a husband so kind,
I shall feel less regret when I leave thee behind.

"I have made thee a bench for the door of thy cot,
And more would I give thee, but more I have not :
Sit and think of me there, in the warm summer day,
And give me three kisses, my labour to pay."

She gave him three kisses, and forth did he fare,
And long did he wander, and no one knew where;
And long from her cottage, through sunshine and rain,
She watched his return, but he came not again.

Her children grew up, and her husband grew grey;
She sat on the bench through the long summer day :
One evening, when twilight was deep on the shore,
There came an old soldier, and stood by the door.

In English he spoke, and none knew what he said,
But her oatcake and milk on the table she spread;
Then he sat to his supper, and blithely he sung,
And she knew the dear sounds of her own native tongue :

"O rich are the feasts in the Englishman's hall,
And the wine sparkles bright in the goblets of Gaul :
But their mingled attractions I well could withstand,
For the milk and the oatcake of Meirion's dear land."

"And art thou a Welchman, old soldier?" she cried.
"Many years have I wandered," the stranger replied :
"Twixt Danube and Thames many rivers there be,
But the bright waves of Cynfael are fairest to me."

"I felled the grey oak, and I hastened to roam,
And I fashioned a bench for the door of my home;
And well my dear sister my labour repaid,
Who gave me three kisses when first it was made."

"In the old English soldier thy brother appears :
Here is gold in abundance, the saving of years :
Give me oatcake and milk in return for my store,
And a seat by thy side on the bench at the door."

Various other songs succeeded, which, as we are not composing a song book, we shall lay aside for the present.

An old squire, who had not missed one of these anniversaries, during more than half a century, now stood up, and filling a half-pint bumper, pronounced, with a stentorian voice — "To the immortal memory of Headlong Ap-Rhaiader, and to the health of his noble descendant and worthy representative!" This example was followed by all the gentlemen present. The harp struck up a triumphal strain; and, the old squire already mentioned vociferating the first stave, they sang, or rather roared, the following

CHORUS.

Hail to the Headlong! the Headlong Ap-Headlong!
All hail to the Headlong, the Headlong Ap-Headlong!
The Headlong Ap-Headlong
Ap-Breakneck Ap Headlong
Ap-Cataract Ap-Pistyll Ap-Rhaiader Ap-Headlong!

The bright bowl we steep in the name of the Headlong :
 Let the youtha pledge it deep to the Headlong Ap-Headlong,
 And the rosy-lipped lasses
 Touch the brim as it passes,
 And kiss the red tide for the Headlong Ap-Headlong !

The loud harp resounds in the hall of the Headlong :
 The light step rebounds in the hall of the Headlong :
 Where shall music invite us,
 Or beauty delight us,
 If not in the hall of the Headlong Ap-Headlong ?

Huzza ! to the health of the Headlong Ap-Headlong !
 Fill the bowl, fill in floods, to the health of the Headlong !
 Till the stream ruby-glowing,
 On all sides o'erflowing,
 Shall fall in cascades to the health of the Headlong !
 The Headlong Ap-Headlong
 Ap-Breakneck Ap-Headlong
 Ap-Cataract Ap-Pistyll Ap-Rhaiader Ap-Headlong !

Squire Headlong returned thanks with an appropriate libation, and the company re-adjourned to the ball-room, where they kept it up till sun-rise, when the little butler summoned them to breakfast.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PROPOSALS.

THE chorus, which celebrated the antiquity of her lineage, had been ringing all night in the ears of Miss Brindle-mew Grimalkin Phœbe Tabitha Ap-Headlong, when, taking the squire aside, while the visitors were sipping their tea and coffee, "Nephew Harry," said she, "I have been noting your behaviour, during the several stages of the ball and supper ; and, though I cannot tax you with any want of gallantry, for you are a very gallant young man, nephew Harry, very gallant — I wish I could say as much for every one" (added she, throwing a spiteful look towards a distant corner, where Mr. Jenkison was sitting with great *nonchalance*, and at the moment dipping a rusk in a cup of chocolate) ; "but I lament to perceive that you were at least as pleased with your lakes of milk-

punch, and your bottles of Champagne and Burgundy, as with any of your delightful partners. Now, though I can readily excuse this degree of incombustibility in the descendant of a family so remarkable in all ages for personal beauty as ours, yet I lament it exceedingly, when I consider that, in conjunction with your present predilection for the easy life of a bachelor, it may possibly prove the means of causing our ancient genealogical tree, which has its roots, if I may so speak, in the foundations of the world, to terminate suddenly in a point: unless you feel yourself moved by my exhortations to follow the example of all your ancestors, by choosing yourself a fitting and suitable helpmate to immortalise the pedigree of Headlong Ap-Rhaiader.

"Egad!" said Squire Headlong, "that is very true. I'll marry directly. A good opportunity to fix on some one, now they are all here; and I'll pop the question without further ceremony."

"What think you," said the old lady, "of Miss Nanny Glyn-Du, the lineal descendant of Llewelyn Ap Yorwerth?"

"She won't do," said Squire Headlong.

"What say you, then," said the lady, "to Miss Williams, of Pontyglasrhydrallt, the descendant of the ancient family of ——?"

"I don't like her," said Squire Headlong; "and as to her ancient family, that is a matter of no consequence. I have antiquity enough for two. They are all moderns, people of yesterday, in comparison with us. What signify six or seven centuries, which are the most they can make up?"

"Why, to be sure," said the aunt, "on that view of the question, it is of no consequence. What think you, then, of Miss Owen, of Nidd-y-Gygfraen? She will have six thousand a year."

"I would not have her," said Squire Headlong, "if she had fifty. I'll think of somebody presently. I should like to be married on the same day with Caprioletta."

"Caprioletta!" said Miss Brindle-mew; "without my being consulted!"

"Consulted!" said the squire: "I was commissioned to tell you, but somehow, or other I let it slip. However, she is going to be married to my friend Mr. Foster, the philosopher."

"Oh!" said the maiden aunt, "that a daughter of our ancient family should marry a philosopher! It is enough to make the bones of all the Ap-Rhaiaders turn in their graves!"

"I happen to be more enlightened," said Squire Headlong, "than any of my ancestors were. Besides, it is Caprioletta's affair, not mine. I tell you, the matter is settled, fixed, determined; and so am I, to be married on the same day. I don't know, now I think of it, whom I can choose better than one of the daughters of my friend Chromatic."

"A Saxon!" said the aunt, turning up her nose, and was commencing a vehement remonstrance; but the squire, exclaiming "Music has charms!" flew over to Mr. Chromatic, and, with a hearty slap on the shoulder, asked him "how he should like him for a son-in-law?" Mr. Chromatic, rubbing his shoulder, and highly delighted with the proposal, answered, "Very much indeed:" but, proceeding to ascertain which of his daughters had captivated the squire, the squire demurred, and was unable to satisfy his curiosity. "I hope," said Mr. Chromatic, "it may be Tenorina; for I imagine Graziosa has conceived a *penchant* for Sir Patrick O'Prism." — "Tenorina, exactly," said Squire Headlong; and became so impatient to bring the matter to a conclusion, that Mr. Chromatic undertook to communicate with his daughter immediately. The young lady proved to be as ready as the squire, and the preliminaries were arranged in little more than five minutes.

Mr. Chromatic's words, that he imagined his daughter Graziosa had conceived a *penchant* for Sir Patrick O'Prism, were not lost on the squire, who at once determined to have as many companions in the scrap as possible, and who, as soon as he could tear himself from Mrs. Headlong's clasp, took three flying bounds across the room to the baronet, and said, "So, Sir Patrick, I find you and I are going to be married?"

"Are we?" said Sir Patrick: "then sure won't I wish you joy, and myself too? for this is the first I have heard of it."

"Well," said Squire Headlong, "I have made up my mind to it, and you must not disappoint me."

"To be sure I won't, if I can help it," said Sir Patrick; "and I am very much obliged to you for taking so much trouble off my hands. And pray, now, who is it that I am to be metamorphosing into Lady O'Prism?"

"Miss Graziosa Chromatic," said the squire.

"Och violet and vermillion!" said Sir Patrick; "though I never thought of it before, I dare say she will suit me as well as another: but then you must persuade the ould Orpheus to draw out a few *notes* of rather a more magical description than those he is so fond of scraping on his crazy violin."

"To be sure he shall," said the squire; and, immediately returning to Mr. Chromatic, concluded the negotiation for Sir Patrick as expeditiously as he had done for himself.

The squire next addressed himself to Mr. Escot: "Here are three couple of us going to throw off together, with the Reverend Doctor Gaster for whipper-in: now, I think you cannot do better than make the fourth with Miss Cephalis; and then, as my father-in-law that is to be would say, we shall compose a very harmonious octave."

"Indeed," said Mr. Escot, "nothing would be more agreeable to both of us than such an arrangement: but the old gentleman, since I first knew him, has changed, like the rest of the world, very lamentably for the worse: now, we wish to bring him to reason, if possible, though we mean to dispense with his consent, if he should prove much longer refractory."

"I'll settle him," said squire Headlong; and immediately posted up to Mr. Cranium, informing him that four marriages were about to take place by way of a merry winding up of the Christmas festivities.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Cranium; "and who are the parties?"

"In the first place," said the squire, "my sister and Mr. Foster: in the second, Miss Graziosa Chromatic and

Sir Patrick O'Prism : in the third, Miss Tenorina Chromatic and your humble servant : and in the fourth—to which, by the by, your consent is wanted——”

“Oho!” said Mr. Cranium.

“Your daughter,” said squire Headlong.

“And Mr. Panscope?” said Mr Cranium.

“And Mr. Escot,” said Squire Headlong. “What would you have better? He has ten thousand virtues.”

“So has Mr. Panscope,” said Mr. Cranium; “he has ten thousand a year.”

“Virtues?” said Squire Headlong.

“Pounds,” said Mr. Cranium.

“I have set my mind on Mr. Escot,” said the squire.

“I am much obliged to you,” said Mr. Cranium, “for dethroning me from my paternal authority.”

“Who fished you out of the water?” said Squire Headlong.

“What is that to the purpose?” said Mr. Cranium.

“The whole process of the action was mechanical and necessary. The application of the poker necessitated the ignition of the powder: the ignition necessitated the explosion: the explosion necessitated my sudden fright, which necessitated my sudden jump, which, from a necessity equally powerful, was in a curvilinear ascent: the descent, being in a corresponding curve, and commencing at a point perpendicular to the extreme line of the edge of the tower, I was, by the necessity of gravitation, attracted, first, through the ivy, and secondly through the hazel, and thirdly through the ash, into the water beneath. The motive or impulse thus adhibited in the person of a drowning man, was as powerful on his material compages as the force of gravitation on mine; and he could no more help jumping into the water than I could help falling into it.”

“All perfectly true,” said Squire Headlong; “and, on the same principle, you make no distinction between the man who knocks you down and him who picks you up.”

“I make this distinction,” said Mr. Cranium, “that I avoid the former as a machine containing a peculiar *cataballitive* quality, which I have found to be not consensual to my mode of pleasurable existence; but I attach

no moral merit or demerit to either of them, as these terms are usually employed, seeing that they are equally creatures of necessity, and must act as they do from the nature of their organisation. I no more blame or praise a man for what is called vice or virtue, than I tax a tuft of hemlock with malevolence, or discover great philanthropy in a field of potatoes, seeing that the men and the plants are equally incapacitated, by their original internal organisation, and the combinations and modifications of external circumstances, from being any thing but what they are. *Quod victus futeare necesse est.*"

"Yet you destroy the hemlock," said Squire Headlong, "and cultivate the potatoe : that is my way, at least."

"I do," said Mr. Cranium ; "because I know that the farinaceous qualities of the potatoe will tend to preserve the great requisites of unity and coalescence in the various constituent portions of my animal republic ; and that the hemlock, if gathered by mistake for parsley, chopped up small with butter, and eaten with a boiled chicken, would necessitate a great derangement, and perhaps a total decomposition, of my corporeal mechanism."

"Very well," said the squire ; "then you are necessitated to like Mr. Escot better than Mr. Panscope?"

"That is a *non sequitur*," said Mr. Cranium.

"Then this is a *sequitur*," said the squire : "your daughter and Mr. Escot are necessitated to love one another ; and, unless you feel necessitated to adhibit your consent, they will feel necessitated to dispense with it ; since it does appear to moral and political economists to be essentially inherent in the eternal fitness of things."

Mr. Cranium fell into a profound reverie : emerging from which, he said, looking Squire Headlong full in the face, "Do you think Mr. Escot would give me that skull?"

"Skull !" said Squire Headlong.

"Yes," said Mr. Cranium, "the skull of Cadwalader."

"To be sure he will," said the squire.

"Ascertain the point," said Mr. Cranium.

"How can you doubt it?" said the squire.

"I simply know," said Mr. Cranium, "that if it were

once in my possession, I would not part with it for any acquisition on earth, much less for a wife. I have had one: and, as marriage has been compared to a pill, I can very safely assert that *one is a dose*: and my reason for thinking that he will not part with it is, that its extraordinary magnitude tends to support his system, as much as its very marked protuberances tend to support mine; and you know his own system is of all things the dearest to every man of liberal thinking and a philosophical tendency."

The squire flew over to Mr. Escot. "I told you," said he, "I would settle him: but there is a very hard condition attached to his compliance."

"I submit to it," said Mr. Escot, "be it what it may."

"Nothing less," said Squire Headlong, "than the absolute and unconditional surrender of the skull of Cadwallader."

"I resign it," said Mr. Escot.

"The skull is yours," said the squire, skipping over to Mr. Cranium.

"I am perfectly satisfied," said Mr. Cranium.

"The lady is yours," said the squire, skipping back to Mr. Escot.

"I am the happiest man alive," said Mr. Escot,

"Come," said the squire, "then there is an amelioration in the state of the sensitive man."

"A slight oscillation of good in the instance of a solitary individual," answered Mr. Escot, "by no means affects the solidity of my opinions concerning the general deterioration of the civilised world; which when I can be induced to contemplate with feelings of satisfaction, I doubt not but that I may be persuaded *to be in love with tortures, and to think charitably of the rack.*" *

Saying these words, he flew off as nimbly as Squire Headlong himself, to impart the happy intelligence to his beautiful Cephalis.

Mr. Cranium now walked up to Mr. Panscope, to console with him on the disappointment of their mutual hopes. Mr. Panscope begged him not to distress himself on the subject, observing, that the monotonous system of female

* Jeremy Taylor.

education brought every individual of the sex to so remarkable an approximation of similarity, that no wise man would suffer himself to be annoyed by a loss so easily repaired ; and that there was much truth, though not much elegance, in a remark which he had heard made on a similar occasion by a post-captain of his acquaintance, " that there never was a fish taken out of the sea, but left another as good behind."

Mr. Cranium replied, that no two individuals having all the organs of the skull similarly developed, the universal resemblance of which Mr. Panscope had spoken could not possibly exist. Mr. Panscope rejoined ; and a long discussion ensued, concerning the comparative influence of natural organisation and artificial education, in which the beautiful Cephalis was totally lost sight of, and which ended, as most controversies do, by each party continuing firm in his own opinion, and professing his profound astonishment at the blindness and prejudices of the other.

In the meanwhile, a great confusion had arisen at the outer doors, the departure of the ball-visitors being impeded by a circumstance which the experience of ages had discovered no means to obviate. The grooms, coachmen, and postillions, were all drunk. It was proposed that the gentlemen should officiate in their places : but the gentlemen were almost all in the same condition. This was a fearful dilemma : but a very diligent investigation brought to light a few servants and a few gentlemen not above *half-seas-over* ; and by an equitable distribution of these rarities, the greater part of the guests were enabled to set forward, with very nearly an even chance of not having their necks broken before they reached home.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE squire and his select party of philosophers and diletanti were again left in peaceful possession of Headlong Hall :

and, as the former made a point of never losing a moment in the accomplishment of a favourite object, he did not suffer many days to elapse, before the spiritual metamorphosis of eight into four was effected by the clerical dexterity of the Reverend Doctor Gaster.

Immediately after the ceremony, the whole party dispersed, the squire having first extracted from every one of his chosen guests a positive promise to re-assemble in August, when they would be better enabled, in its most appropriate season, to form a correct judgment of Cambrian hospitality.

Mr. Jenkison shook hands at parting with his two brother philosophers. "According to your respective systems," said he, "I ought to congratulate *you* on a change for the better, which I do most cordially: and to condole with *you* on a change for the worse, though, when I consider whom you have chosen, I should violate every principle of probability in doing so."

"You will do well," said Mr. Foster, "to follow our example. The extensive circle of general philanthropy, which, in the present advanced stage of human nature, comprehends in its circumference the destinies of the whole species, originated, and still proceeds, from that narrower circle of domestic affection, which first set limits to the empire of selfishness, and, by purifying the passions and enlarging the affections of mankind, has given to the views of benevolence an increasing and illimitable expansion, which will finally diffuse happiness and peace over the whole surface of the world."

"The affection," said Mr. Escot, "of two congenial spirits, united not by legal bondage and superstitious imposture, but by mutual confidence and reciprocal virtues, is the only counterbalancing consolation in this scene of mischief and misery. But how rarely is this the case according to the present system of marriage! So far from being a central point of expansion to the great circle of universal benevolence, it serves only to concentrate the feelings of natural sympathy in the reflected selfishness of family interest, and to substitute for the *humani nihil alienum puto* of youthful philanthropy, the *charity begins at home* of maturer years.

And what accession of individual happiness is acquired by this oblivion of the general good? Luxury, despotism, and avarice have so seized and entangled nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of the human race, that the matrimonial compact, which ought to be the most easy, the most free, and the most simple of all engagements, is become the most slavish and complicated,—a mere question of finance,—a system of bargain, and barter, and commerce, and trick, and chicanery, and dissimulation, and fraud. Is there one instance in ten thousand, in which the buds of first affection are not most cruelly and hopelessly blasted, by avarice, or ambition, or arbitrary power? Females, condemned during the whole flower of their youth to a worse than monastic celibacy, irrevocably debarred from the hope to which their first affections pointed, will, at a certain period of life, as the natural delicacy of taste and feeling is gradually worn away by the attrition of society, become willing to take up with any coxcomb or scoundrel, whom that merciless and mercenary gang of cold-blooded slaves and assassins, called, in the ordinary prostitution of language *friends*, may agree in designating as a *prudent choice*. Young men, on the other hand, are driven by the same vile superstitions from the company of the most amiable and modest of the opposite sex, to that of those miserable victims and outcasts of a world which dares to call itself virtuous, whom that very society whose pernicious institutions first caused their aberrations,—consigning them, without one tear of pity or one struggle of remorse, to penury, infamy, and disease,—condemns to bear the burden of its own atrocious absurdities! Thus, the youth of one sex is consumed in slavery, disappointment, and spleen; that of the other, in frantic folly and selfish intemperance: till at length, on the necks of a couple so enfeebled, so perverted, so distempered both in body and soul, society throws the yoke of marriage: that yoke which, once rivetted on the necks of its victims, clings to them like the poisoned garments of Nessus or Medea. What can be expected from these ill-assorted yoke-fellows, but that, like two ill-tempered hounds, coupled by a tyrannical sportsman, they should drag on their indissoluble fetter, snarling and

growling, and pulling in different directions? What can be expected for their wretched offspring, but sickness and suffering, premature decrepitude, and untimely death? In this, as in every other institution of civilised society, avarice, luxury, and disease constitute the TRIANGULAR HARMONY of the life of man. Avarice conducts him to the abyss of toil and crime ; luxury seizes on his ill-gotten spoil ; and, while he revels in her enchantments, or groans beneath her tyranny, disease bursts upon him, and sweeps him from the earth."

"Your theory," said Mr. Jenkison, "forms an admirable counterpoise to your example. As far as I am attracted by the one, I am repelled by the other. Thus, the scales of my philosophical balance remain eternally equi-ponderant, and I see no reason to say of either of them, ΟΙΧΕΤΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΑΪΔΑΟ."*

* *It descends to the shades : or, in other words, it goes to the devil.*

NIGHTMARE ABBEY.

There 's a dark lantern of the spirit,
Which none see by but those who bear it,
That makes them in the dark see visions
And hag themselves with apparitions,
Find racks for their own minds, and vaunt
Of their own misery and want. — BUTLER.

[First published in 1818.]

Matthew. Oh ! it's your only fine humour, sir. Your true melancholy breeds your perfect fine wit, sir. I am melancholy myself, divers times, sir ; and then do I no more hut take pen and paper presently, and overflow you half a score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting.

Stephen. Truly, sir, and I love such things out of measure.

Matthew. Why, I pray you, sir, make use of my study : it's at your service.

Stephen. I thank you, sir, I shall be bold, I warrant you. Have you a stool there, to be melancholy upon ?

BEN JONSON, *Every Man in his Humour*, Act 3. Sc. 1.

NIGHTMARE ABBEY.

Ay esleu gazouiller et siffler oye, comme dit le commun proverbe, entre les cygnes, plutoust que d'estre entre tant de gentils poëtes et faconds orateurs mut du tout estimé. — RABELAIS, *Prot. L. 5.*

CHAPTER I.

NIGHTMARE ABBEY, a venerable family-mansion, in a highly picturesque state of semi-dilapidation, pleasantly situated on a strip of dry land between the sea and the fens, at the verge of the county of Lincoln, had the honour to be the seat of Christopher Glowry, Esquire. This gentleman was naturally of an atrabilious temperament, and much troubled with those phantoms of indigestion which are commonly called *blue devils*. He had been deceived in an early friendship: he had been cross'd in love; and had offered his hand, from pique, to a lady, who accepted it from interest, and who, in so doing, violently tore asunder the bonds of a tried and youthful attachment. Her vanity was gratified by being the mistress of a very extensive, if not very lively, establishment; but all the springs of her sympathies were frozen. Riches she possessed, but that which enriches them, the participation of affection, was wanting. All that they could purchase for her became indifferent to her, because that which they could not purchase, and which was more valuable than themselves, she had, for their sake, thrown away. She discovered, when it was too late, that she had mistaken the means for the end—that riches, rightly used, are instruments of happiness, but are not in themselves happiness. In this wilful blight of her affections, she found them valueless as means: they had

been the end to which she had immolated all her affections, and were now the only end that remained to her. She did not confess this to herself as a principle of action, but it operated through the medium of unconscious self-deception, and terminated in inveterate avarice. She laid on external things the blame of her mind's internal disorder, and thus became by degrees an accomplished scold. She often went her daily rounds through a series of deserted apartments, every creature in the house vanishing at the creak of her shoe, much more at the sound of her voice, to which the nature of things affords no simile ; for, as far as the voice of woman, when attuned by gentleness and love, transcends all other sounds in harmony, so far does it surpass all others in discord, when stretched into unnatural shrillness by anger and impatience.

Mr. Glowry used to say that his house was no better than a spacious kennel, for every one in it led the life of a dog. Disappointed both in love and in friendship, and looking upon human learning as vanity, he had come to a conclusion that there was but one good thing in the world, *videlicet*, a good dinner ; and this his parsimonious lady seldom suffered him to enjoy : but, one morning, like Sir Leoline in *Christabel*, "he woke and found his lady dead," and remained a very consolate widower, with one small child.

This only son and heir Mr. Glowry had christened Scythrop, from the name of a maternal ancestor, who had hanged himself one rainy day in a fit of *tædium vitæ*, and had been eulogised by a coroner's jury in the comprehensive phrase of *felo de se* ; on which account, Mr. Glowry held his memory in high honour, and made a punchbowl of his skull.

When Scythrop grew up, he was sent, as usual, to a public school, where a little learning was painfully beaten into him, and from thence to the university, where it was carefully taken out of him ; and he was sent home like a well-threshed ear of corn, with nothing in his head : having finished his education to the high satisfaction of the master and fellows of his college, who had, in testimony of their approbation, presented him with a silver

fish-slice, on which his name figured at the head of a laudatory inscription in some semi-barbarous dialect of Anglo-Saxonised Latin.

His fellow-students, however, who drove tandem and random in great perfection, and were connoisseurs in good inns, had taught him to drink deep ere he departed. He had passed much of his time with these choice spirits, and had seen the rays of the midnight lamp tremble on many a lengthening file of empty bottles. He passed his vacations sometimes at Nightmare Abbey, sometimes in London, at the house of his uncle, Mr. Hilary, a very cheerful and elastic gentleman, who had married the sister of the melancholy Mr. Glowry. The company that frequented his house was the gayest of the gay. Scythrop danced with the ladies and drank with the gentlemen, and was pronounced by both a very accomplished charming fellow, and an honour to the university.

At the house of Mr. Hilary, Scythrop first saw the beautiful Miss Emily Girouette. He fell in love; which is nothing new. He was favourably received; which is nothing strange. Mr. Glowry and Mr. Girouette had a meeting on the occasion, and quarrelled about the terms of the bargain; which is neither new nor strange. The lovers were torn asunder, weeping and vowing everlasting constancy; and, in three weeks after this tragical event, the lady was led a smiling bride to the altar, by the Honourable Mr. Lackwit; which is neither strange nor new.

Scythrop received this intelligence at Nightmare Abbey, and was half distracted on the occasion. It was his first disappointment, and preyed deeply on his sensitive spirit. His father, to comfort him, read him a Commentary on Ecclesiastes, which he had himself composed, and which demonstrated incontrovertibly that all is vanity. He insisted particularly on the text, "One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman amongst all those have I not found."

"How could he expect it," said Scythrop, "when the whole thousand were locked up in his seraglio? His experience is no precedent for a free state of society like that in which we live."

"Locked up or at large," said Mr. Glowry, "the result is the same: their minds are always locked up, and vanity and interest keep the key. I speak feelingly, Scythrop."

"I am sorry for it, sir," said Scythrop. "But how is it that their minds are locked up? The fault is in their artificial education, which studiously models them into mere musical dolls, to be set out for sale in the great toy-shop of society."

"To be sure," said Mr. Glowry, "their education is not so well finished as yours has been; and your idea of a musical doll is good. I bought one myself, but it was confoundedly out of tune; but, whatever be the cause, Scythrop, the effect is certainly this, that one is pretty nearly as good as another, as far as any judgment can be formed of them before marriage. It is only after marriage that they show their true qualities, as I know by bitter experience. Marriage is, therefore, a lottery, and the less choice and selection a man bestows on his ticket the better; for, if he has incurred considerable pains and expense to obtain a lucky number, and his lucky number proves a blank, he experiences not a simple, but a complicated disappointment; the loss of labour and money being superadded to the disappointment of drawing a blank, which, constituting simply and entirely the grievance of him who has chosen his ticket at random, is, from its simplicity, the more endurable." This very excellent reasoning was thrown away upon Scythrop, who retired to his tower as dismal and disconsolate as before.

The tower which Scythrop inhabited stood at the south-eastern angle of the Abbey; and, on the southern side, the foot of the tower opened on a terrace, which was called the garden, though nothing grew on it but ivy, and a few amphibious weeds. The south-western tower, which was ruinous and full of owls, might, with equal propriety, have been called the aviary. This terracc or garden, or terrace-garden, or garden-terrace (the reader may name it *ad libitum*), took in an oblique view of the open sea, and fronted a long tract of level sea-coast, and a fine monotony of fens and windmills.

The reader will judge, from what we have said, that this building was a sort of castellated abbey ; and it will, probably, occur to him to inquire if it had been one of the strong-holds of the ancient church militant. Whether this was the case, or how far it had been indebted to the taste of Mr. Glowry's ancestors for any transmutations from its original state, are, unfortunately, circumstances not within the pale of our knowledge.

The north-western tower contained the apartments of Mr. Glowry. The moat at its base, and the fens beyond, comprised the whole of his prospect. This moat surrounded the Abbey, and was in immediate contact with the walls on every side but the south.

The north-eastern tower was appropriated to the domestics, whom Mr. Glowry always chose by one of two criterions,—a long face, or a dismal name. His butler was Raven ; his steward was Crow ; his valet was Skellet. Mr. Glowry maintained that the valet was of French extraction, and that his name was Squelette. His grooms were Mattocks and Graves. On one occasion, being in want of a footman, he received a letter from a person signing himself Diggory Deathshead, and lost no time in securing this acquisition ; but on Diggory's arrival, Mr. Glowry was horror-struck by the sight of a round ruddy face, and a pair of laughing eyes. Deathshead was always grinning,—not a ghastly smile, but the grin of a comic mask ; and disturbed the echoes of the hall with so much unhallowed laughter, that Mr. Glowry gave him his discharge. Diggory, however, had staid long enough to make conquests of all the old gentleman's maids, and left him a flourishing colony of young Deathsheads to join chorus with the owls, that had before been the exclusive choristers of Nightmare Abbey.

The main body of the building was divided into rooms of state, spacious apartments for feasting, and numerous bedrooms for visitors, who, however, were few and far between.

Family interests compelled Mr. Glowry to receive occasional visits from Mr. and Mrs. Hilary, who paid them from the same motive ; and, as the lively gentleman on these occasions found few conductors for his exuberant

gaiety, he became like a double-charged electric jar, which often exploded in some burst of outrageous merriment to the signal discomposure of Mr. Glowry's nerves.

Another occasional visitor, much more to Mr. Glowry's taste, was Mr. Flosky*, a very lachrymose and morbid gentleman, of some note in the literary world, but in his own estimation of much more merit than name. The part of his character which recommended him to Mr. Glowry, was his very fine sense of the grim and the tearful. No one could relate a dismal story with so many minutæ of supercrogatory wretchedness. No one could call up a *raw-head and bloody bones* with so many adjuncts and circumstances of ghastliness. Mystery was his mental element. He lived in the midst of that visionary world in which nothing is but what is not. He dreamed with his eyes open, and saw ghosts dancing round him at noontide. He had been in his youth an enthusiast for liberty, and had hailed the dawn of the French Revolution as the promise of a day that was to banish war and slavery, and every form of vice and misery, from the face of the earth. Because all this was not done, he deduced that nothing was done; and from this deduction, according to his system of logic, he drew a conclusion that worse than nothing was done; that the overthrow of the feudal fortresses of tyranny and superstition was the greatest calamity that had ever befallen mankind; and that their only hope now was to rake the rubbish together, and rebuild it without any of those loopholes by which the light had originally crept in. To qualify himself for a coadjutor in this laudable task, he plunged into the central opacity of Kantian metaphysics, and lay *perdu* several years in transcendental darkness, till the common daylight of common sense became intolerable to his eyes. He called the sun an *ignis fatuus*; and exhorted all who would listen to his friendly voice, which were about as many as called "God save King Richard," to shelter themselves from its delusive radiance in the obscure haunt of Old Philosophy. This word Old had great charms for him. The good old times were always on his lips; meaning the days when polemic theology was in

* A corruption of Flosky, quasi φιλοσκίος a lover, or sectator, of shadows.

its prime, and rival prelates beat the drum ecclesiastic with Herculean vigour, till the one wound up his series of syllogisms with the very orthodox conclusion of roasting the other.

But the dearest friend of Mr. Glowry, and his most welcome guest, was Mr. Toobad, the Manichæan Millennarian. The twelfth verse of the twelfth chapter of Revelations was always in his mouth: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come among you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." He maintained that the supreme dominion of the world was, for wise purposes, given over for a while to the Evil Principle; and that this precise period of time, commonly called the enlightened age, was the point of his plenitude of power. He used to add that by and by he would be cast down, and a high and happy order of things succeed; but he never omitted the saving clause, "Not in our time:" which last words were always echoed in doleful response by the sympathetic Mr. Glowry.

Another and very frequent visitor, was the Reverend Mr. Larynx, the vicar of Claydyke, a village about ten miles distant; — a good-natured accommodating divine, who was always most obligingly ready to take a dinner and a bed at the house of any country gentleman in distress for a companion. Nothing came amiss to him, — a game at billiards, at chess, at draughts, at hackgammon, at piquet, or at all-fours in a *tête-a-tête*, — or any game on the cards, round, square, or triangular, in a party of any number exceeding two. He would even dance among friends, rather than that a lady, even if she were on the wrong side of thirty, should sit still for want of a partner. For a ride, a walk, or a sail, in the morning, — a song after dinner, a ghost story after supper, — a hottle of port with the squire, or a cup of green tea with his lady, — for all or any of these, or for any thing else that was agreeable to any one else, consistently with the dye of his coat, the Reverend Mr. Larynx was at all times equally ready. When at Nightmare Abbey, he would condole with Mr. Glowry, — drink Madeira with Seythrop, — crack jokes with Mr. Hilary, — hand Mrs. Hilary to the piano, take

charge of her fan and gloves, and turn over her music with surprising dexterity, — quote Revelations with Mr. Too-bad, — and lament the good old times of feudal darkness with the transcendental Mr. Flosky.

CHAPTER II.

SNORTLY after the disastrous termination of Scythrop's passion for Miss Emily Girouette, Mr. Glowry found himself, much against his will, involved in a lawsuit, which compelled him to dance attendance on the High Court of Chancery. Scythrop was left alone at Nightmare Abbey. He was a burnt child, and dreaded the fire of female eyes. He wandered about the ample pile, or along the garden-terrace, with "his cogitative faculties immersed in cogibundity of cogitation." The terrace terminated at the south-western tower, which, as we have said, was ruinous and full of owls. Here would Scythrop take his evening seat, on a fallen fragment of mossy stone, with his back resting against the ruined wall, — a thick canopy of ivy, with an owl in it, over his head, — and the Sorrows of Werter in his hand. He had some taste for romance reading before he went to the university, where, we must confess, in justice to his college, he was cured of the love of reading in all its shapes; and the cure would have been radical, if disappointment in love, and total solitude, had not conspired to bring on a relapse. He began to devour romances and German tragedies, and, by the recommendation of Mr. Flosky, to pore over ponderous tomes of transcendental philosophy, which reconciled him to the labour of studying them by their mystical jargon and necromantic imagery. In the congenial solitude of Nightmare Abbey, the distempered ideas of metaphysical romance and romantic metaphysics had ample time and space to germinate into a fertile crop of chimeras, which rapidly shot up into vigorous and abundant vegetation.

He now became troubled with the *passion for reforming*

*the world.** He built many castles in the air, and peopled them with secret tribunals, and bands of illuminati, who were always the imaginary instruments of his projected regeneration of the human species. As he intended to institute a perfect republic, he invested himself with absolute sovereignty over these mystical dispensers of liberty. He slept with Horrid Mysteries under his pillow, and dreamed of venerable cleutherarchs and ghastly confederates holding midnight conventions in subterranean caves. He passed whole mornings in his study, immersed in gloomy reverie, stalking about the room in his nightcap, which he pulled over his eyes like a cowl, and folding his striped calico dressing-gown about him like the mantle of a conspirator.

"Action," thus he soliloquised, "is the result of opinion, and to new-model opinion would be to new-model society. Knowledge is power; it is in the hands of a few, who employ it to mislead the many, for their own selfish purposes of aggrandisement and appropriation. What if it were in the hands of a few who should employ it to lead the many? What if it were universal, and the multitude were enlightened? No. The many must be always in leading-strings; but let them have wise and honest conductors. A few to think, and many to act; that is the only basis of perfect society. So thought the ancient philosophers: they had their esoterical and exoterical doctrines. So thinks the sublime Kant, who delivers his oracles in language which none but the initiated can comprehend. Such were the views of those secret associations of illuminati, which were the terror of superstition and tyranny, and which, carefully selecting wisdom and genius from the great wilderness of society, as the bee selects honey from the flowers of the thorn and the nettle, bound all human excellence in a chain, which, if it had not been prematurely broken, would have commanded opinion, and regenerated the world."

Scythrop proceeded to meditate on the practicability of reviving a confederation of regenerators. To get a clear view of his own ideas, and to feel the pulse of the wisdom and genius of the age, he wrote and published a treatise, in

* See Forsyth's Principles of Moral Science.

which his meanings were carefully wrapt up in the monk's hood of transcendental technology, but filled with hints of matter deep and dangerous, which he thought would set the whole nation in a ferment; and he awaited the result in awful expectation, as a miner who has fired a train awaits the explosion of a rock. However, he listened and heard nothing; for the explosion, if any ensued, was not sufficiently loud to shake a single leaf of the ivy on the towers of Nightmare Abbey; and some months afterwards he received a letter from his bookseller, informing him that only seven copies had been sold, and concluding with a polite request for the balance.

Scythrop did not despair. "Seven copies," he thought, "have been sold. Seven is a mystical number, and the omen is good. Let me find the seven purchasers of my seven copies, and they shall be the seven golden candlesticks with which I will illuminate the world."

Scythrop had a certain portion of mechanical genius, which his romantic projects tended to develope. He constructed models of cells and recesses, sliding panels and secret passages, that would have baffled the skill of the Parisian police. He took the opportunity of his father's absence to smuggle a dumb carpenter into the Abbey, and between them they gave reality to one of these models in Scythrop's tower. Scythrop foresaw that a great leader of human regeneration would be involved in fearful dilemmas, and determined, for the benefit of mankind in general, to adopt all possible precautions for the preservation of himself.

The servants, even the women, had been tutored into silence. Profound stillness reigned throughout and around the Abbey, except when the occasional shutting of a door would peal in long reverberations through the galleries, or the heavy tread of the pensive butler would wake the hollow echoes of the hall. Scythrop stalked about like the grand inquisitor, and the servants flitted past him like familiars. In his evening meditations on the terrace, under the ivy of the ruined tower, the only sounds that came to his ear were, the rustling of the wind in the ivy, the plaintive voices of the feathered choristers, the owls, the occasional

striking of the Abbey clock, and the monotonous dash of the sea on its low and level shore. In the mean time, he drank Madeira, and laid deep schemes for a thorough repair of the crazy fabric of human nature.

CHAPTER III.

MR. GLOWRY returned from London with the loss of his lawsuit. Justice was with him, but the law was against him. He found Seythrop in a mood most sympathetically tragic; and they vied with each other in enlivening their cups by lamenting the depravity of this degenerate age, and occasionally interspersing divers grim jokes about graves, worms, and epitaphs. Mr. Glowry's friends, whom we have mentioned in the first chapter, availed themselves of his return to pay him a simultaneous visit. At the same time arrived Seythrop's friend and fellow-collegian, the Honourable Mr. Listless. Mr. Glowry had discovered this fashionable young gentleman in London, "stretched on the rack of a too easy chair," and devoured with a gloomy and misanthropical *nil curo*, and had pressed him so earnestly to take the benefit of the pure country air, at Nightmare Abbey, that Mr. Listless, finding it would give him more trouble to refuse than to comply, summoned his French valet, Fatout, and told him he was going to Lincolnshire. On this simple hint, Fatout went to work, and the imperials were packed, and the post-chariot was at the door, without the Honourable Mr. Listless having said or thought another syllable on the subject.

Mr. and Mrs. Hilary brought with them an orphan niece, a daughter of Mr. Glowry's youngest sister, who had made a runaway love-match with an Irish officer. The lady's fortune disappeared in the first year: love, by a natural consequence, disappeared in the second: the Irishman himself, by a still more natural consequence,

disappeared in the third. Mr. Glowry had allowed his sister an annuity, and she had lived in retirement with her only daughter, whom, at her death, which had recently happened, she commended to the care of Mrs. Hilary.

Miss Marionetta Celestina O'Carroll was a very blooming and accomplished young lady. Being a compound of the *Allegro Vivace* of the O'Carrolls, and of the *Andante Doloroso* of the Glowries, she exhibited in her own character all the diversities of an April sky. Her hair was light-brown; her eyes hazel, and sparkling with a mild but fluctuating light; her features regular; her lips full, and of equal size; and her person surpassingly graceful. She was a proficient in music. Her conversation was sprightly, but always on subjects light in their nature and limited in their interest: for moral sympathies, in any general sense, had no place in her mind. She had some coquetry, and more caprice, liking and disliking almost in the same moment; pursuing an object with earnestness while it seemed unattainable, and rejecting it when in her power as not worth the trouble of possession.

Whether she was touched with a *penchant* for her cousin Scythrop, or was merely curious to see what effect the tender passion would have on so *outré* a person, she had not been three days in the Abbey before she threw out all the lures of her beauty and accomplishments to make a prize of his heart. Scythrop proved an easy conquest. The image of Miss Emily Girquette was already sufficiently dimmed by the power of philosophy and the exercise of reason: for to these influences, or to any influence but the true one, are usually ascribed the mental cures performed by the great physician Time. Scythrop's romantic dreams had indeed given him many *pure anticipated cognitions* of combinations of beauty and intelligence, which, he had some misgivings, were not exactly realised in his cousin Marionetta; but, in spite of these misgivings, he soon became distractedly in love; which, when the young lady clearly perceived, she altered her tactics, and assumed as much coldness and reserve as she had before shown ardent and ingenuous attachment. Scythrop was

confounded at the sudden change ; but, instead of falling at her feet and requesting an explanation, he retreated to his tower, muffled himself in his nightcap, seated himself in the president's chair of his imaginary secret tribunal, summoned Marionetta with all terrible formalities, frightened her out of her wits, disclosed himself, and clasped the beautiful penitent to his bosom.

While he was acting this reverie — in the moment in which the awful president of the secret tribunal was throwing back his cowl and his mantle, and discovering himself to the lovely culprit as her adoring and magnanimous lover, the door of the study opened, and the real Marionetta appeared.

The motives which had led her to the tower were a little penitence, a little concern, a little affection, and a little fear as to what the sudden secession of Scythrop, occasioned by her sudden change of manner, might portend. She had tapped several times unheard, and of course unanswered ; and at length, timidly and cautiously opening the door, she discovered him standing up before a black velvet chair, which was mounted on an old oak table, in the act of throwing open his striped calico dressing-gown, and flinging away his nightcap — which is what the French call an imposing attitude.

Each stood a few moments fixed in their respective places — the lady in astonishment, and the gentleman in confusion. Marionetta was the first to break silence. “ For heaven's sake,” said she, “ my dear Scythrop, what is the matter? ”

“ For heaven's sake, indeed ! ” said Scythrop, springing from the table ; “ for your sake, Marionetta, and you are my heaven, — distraction is the matter. I adore you, Marionetta, and your cruelty drives me mad.” He threw himself at her knees, devoured her hand with kisses, and breathed a thousand vows in the most passionate language of romance.

Marionetta listened a long time in silence, till her lover had exhausted his eloquence and paused for a reply. She then said, with a very arch look, “ I prithee deliver thyself like a man of this world.” The levity of this quotation,

and of the manner in which it was delivered, jarred so discordantly on the high-wrought enthusiasm of the romantic inamorato, that he sprang upon his feet, and beat his forehead with his clenched fists. The young lady was terrified; and, deeming it expedient to soothe him, took one of his hands in hers, placed the other hand on his shoulder, looked up in his face with a winning seriousness, and said, in the tenderest possible tone, "What would you have, Scythrop?"

Scythrop was in heaven again. "What would I have? What but you, Marionetta? You, for the companion of my studies, the partner of my thoughts, the auxiliary of my great designs for the emancipation of mankind."

"I am afraid I should be but a poor auxiliary, Scythrop. What would you have me do?"

"Do as Rosalia does with Carlos, divine Marionetta. Let us each open a vein in the other's arm, mix our blood in a bowl, and drink it as a sacrament of love. Then we shall see visions of transcendental illumination, and soar on the wings of ideas into the space of pure intelligence."

Marionetta could not reply; she had not so strong a stomach as Rosalia, and turned sick at the proposition. She disengaged herself suddenly from Scythrop, sprang through the door of the tower, and fled with precipitation along the corridors. Scythrop pursued her, crying, "Stop, stop, Marionetta — my life, my love!" and was gaining rapidly on her flight, when, at an ill-omened corner, where two corridors ended in an angle, at the head of a staircase, he came into sudden and violent contact with Mr. Toobad, and they both plunged together to the foot of the stairs, like two billiard-balls into one pocket. This gave the young lady time to escape, and enclose herself in her chamber; while Mr. Toobad, rising slowly, and rubbing his knees and shoulders, said, "You see, my dear Scythrop, in this little incident, one of the innumerable proofs of the temporary supremacy of the devil; for what but a systematic design and concurrent contrivance of evil could have made the angles of time and place coincide in

our unfortunate persons at the head of this accursed staircase? "

"Nothing else, certainly," said Scythrop: "you are perfectly in the right, Mr. Toobad. Evil, and mischief, and misery, and confusion, and vanity, and vexation of spirit, and death, and disease, and assassination, and war, and poverty, and pestilence, and famine, and avarice, and selfishness, and rancour, and jealousy, and spleen, and malevolence, and the disappointments of philanthropy, and the faithlessness of friendship, and the crosses of love—all prove the accuracy of your views, and the truth of your system; and it is not impossible that the infernal interruption of this fall down stairs may throw a colour of evil on the whole of my future existence."

"My dear boy," said Mr. Toobad, "you have a fine eye for consequences."

So saying, he embraced Scythrop, who retired, with a disconsolate step, to dress for dinner; while Mr. Toobad stalked across the hall, repeating, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, for the devil is come among you, having great wrath."

CHAPTER IV.

THE flight of Marionetta, and the pursuit of Scythrop, had been witnessed by Mr. Glowry, who, in consequence, narrowly observed his son and his niece in the evening; and, concluding from their manner, that there was a better understanding between them than he wished to see, he determined on obtaining the next morning from Scythrop a full and satisfactory explanation. He, therefore, shortly after breakfast, entered Scythrop's tower, with a very grave face, and said, without ceremony or preface, "So, sir, you are in love with your cousin."

Scythrop, with as little hesitation, answered, "Yes, sir."

"*That is candid, at least; and she is in love with you.*"

"I wish she were, sir."

"You know she is, sir."

"Indeed, sir, I do not."

"But you hope she is."

"I do, from my soul."

"Now that is very provoking, Scythrop, and very disappointing: I could not have supposed that you, Scythrop Glowry, of Nightmare Abbey, would have been infatuated with such a dancing, laughing, singing, thoughtless, careless, merry-hearted thing, as Marionetta — in all respects the reverse of you and me. It is very disappointing, Scythrop. And do you know, sir, that Marionetta has no fortune?"

"It is the more reason, sir, that her husband should have one."

"The more reason for her; but not for you. My wife had no fortune, and I had no consolation in my calamity. And do you reflect, sir, what an enormous slice this lawsuit has cut out of our family estate? we who used to be the greatest landed proprietors in Lincolnshire."

"To be sure, sir, we had more acres of fen than any man on this coast: but what are fens to love? What are dykes and windmills to Marionetta?"

"And what, sir, is love to a windmill? Not grist, I am certain: besides, sir, I have made a choice for you. I have made a choice for you, Scythrop. Beauty, genius, accomplishments, and a great fortune into the bargain. Such a lovely, serious creature, in a fine state of high dissatisfaction with the world, and every thing in it. Such a delightful surprise I had prepared for you. Sir, I have pledged my honour to the contract — the honour of the Glowries of Nightmare Abbey: and now, sir, what is to be done?"

"Indeed, sir, I cannot say. I claim, on this occasion, that liberty of action which is the co-natal prerogative of every rational being."

"Liberty of action, sir? there is no such thing as liberty

of action. We are all slaves and puppets of a blind and unpathetic necessity." .

"Very true, sir; but liberty of action, between individuals, consists in their being differently influenced, or modified, by the same universal necessity; so that the results are unconsentaneous, and their respective necessitated volitions clash and fly off in a tangent."

"Your logic is good, sir: but you are aware, too, that one individual may be a medium of adhibiting to another a mode or form of necessity, which may have more or less influence in the production of consentaneity; and, therefore, sir, if you do not comply with my wishes in this instance (you have had your own way in every thing else), I shall be under the necessity of disinheriting you, though I shall do it with tears in my eyes." Having said these words, he vanished suddenly, in the dread of Scythrop's logic.

Mr. Glowry immediately sought Mrs. Hilary, and communicated to her his views of the case in point. Mrs. Hilary, as the phrase is, was as fond of Marionetta as if she had been her own child: but — there is always a *but* on these occasions — she could do nothing for her in the way of fortune, as she had two hopeful sons, who were finishing their education at Brazen-nose, and who would not like to encounter any diminution of their prospects, when they should be brought out of the house of mental bondage — i. e. the university — to the land flowing with milk and honey — i. e. the west end of London.

Mrs. Hilary hinted to Marionetta, that propriety, and delicacy, and decorum, and dignity, &c. &c. &c.*, would require them to leave the Abbey immediately. Marionetta listened in silent submission, for she knew that her inheritance was passive obedience; but, when Scythrop, who had watched the opportunity of Mrs. Hilary's departure, entered, and, without speaking a word, threw himself at her feet in a paroxysm of grief, the young lady, in equal silence and sorrow, threw her arms round his neck and burst into tears. A very tender scene ensued, which the

* We are not masters of the whole vocabulary. See any novel by any literary lady.

sympathetic susceptibilities of the soft-hearted reader can more accurately imagine than we can delineate. But when Marionetta hinted that she was to leave the Abbey immediately, Scythrop snatched from its repository his ancestor's skull, filled it with Madeira, and presenting himself before Mr. Glowry, threatened to drink off the contents if Mr. Glowry did not immediately promise that Marionetta should not be taken from the Abbey without her own consent. Mr. Glowry, who took the Madeira to be some deadly brewage, gave the required promise in disinal panic. Scythrop returned to Marionetta with a joyful heart, and drank the Madeira by the way.

Mr. Glowry, during his residence in London, had come to an agreement with his friend Mr. Toobad, that a match between Scythrop and Mr. Toobad's daughter would be a very desirable occurrence. She was finishing her education in a German convent, but Mr. Toobad described her as being fully impressed with the truth of his Ahrimanic * philosophy, and being altogether as gloomy and antithalian a young lady as Mr. Glowry himself could desire for the future mistress of Nightmare Abbey. She had a great fortune in her own right, which was not, as we have seen, without its weight in inducing Mr. Glowry to set his heart upon her as his daughter-in-law that was to be; he was therefore very much disturbed by Scythrop's untoward attachment to Marionetta. He condoled on the occasion with Mr. Toobad; who said, that he had been too long accustomed to the intermeddling of the devil in all his affairs, to be astonished at this new trace of his cloven claw; but that he hoped to outwit him yet, for he was sure there could be no comparison between his daughter and Mario-

* Ahrimanes, in the Persian mythology, is the evil power, the prince of the kingdom of darkness. He is the rival of Oromazes, the prince of the kingdom of light. These two powers have divided and equal dominion. Sometimes one of the two has a temporary supremacy.—According to Mr. Toobad, the present period would be the reign of Ahrimanes. Lord Byron seems to be of the same opinion, by the use he has made of Ahrimanes in "Manfred;" where the great Alastor, or *Κακός Δαίμων*, of Persia, is hailed king of the world by the Nemesis of Greece, in concert with three of the Scandinavian Valkyrie, under the name of the Destinies; the astrological spirits of the alchemists of the middle ages; an elemental witch, transplanted from Denmark to the Alps; and a chorus of Dr. Faustus's devils, who come in the last act for a soul. It is difficult to conceive where this heterogeneous mythological company could have originally met, except at a *table d'hôte*, like the six kings in "Candida."

netta in the mind of any one who had a proper perception of the fact, that, the world being a great theatre of evil, seriousness and solemnity are the characteristics of wisdom, and laughter and merriment make a human being no better than a baboon. Mr. Glowry comforted himself with this view of the subject, and urged Mr. Toobad to expedite his daughter's return from Germany. Mr. Toobad said he was in daily expectation of her arrival in London, and would set off immediately to meet her, that he might lose no time in bringing her to Nightmare Abbey. "Then," he added, "we shall see whether Thalia or Melpomene — whether the Allegra or the Penserosa — will carry off the symbol of victory."—"There can be no doubt," said Mr. Glowry, "which way the scale will incline, or Scythrop is no true scion of the venerable stem of the Glowrys."

CHAPTER V.

MANIONETTA felt secure of Scythrop's heart; and notwithstanding the difficulties that surrounded her, she could not debar herself from the pleasure of tormenting her lover, whom she kept in a perpetual fever. Sometimes she would meet him with the most unqualified affection; sometimes with the most chilling indifference; rousing him to anger by artificial coldness—softening him to love by eloquent tenderness—or inflaming him to jealousy by coquetting with the Honourable Mr. Listless, who seemed, under her magical influence, to burst into sudden life, like the bud of the evening primrose. Sometimes she would sit by the piano, and listen with becoming attention to Scythrop's pathetic remonstrances; but, in the most impassioned part of his oratory, she would convert all his ideas into a chaos, by striking up some Rondo Allegro, and saying, "Is it not pretty?" Scythrop would begin to storm; and she would answer him with,

"Zitti, zitti, piano, piano,
Non facciamo confusione,"

or some similar *facezia*, till he would start away from her, and enclose himself in his tower, in an agony of agitation, vowing to renounce her, and her whole sex, for ever ; and returning to her presence at the summons of the billet, which she never failed to send with many expressions of penitence and promises of amendment. Scythrop's schemes for regenerating the world, and detecting his seven golden candlesticks, went on very slowly in this fever of his spirit.

Things proceeded in this train for several days ; and Mr. Glowry began to be uneasy at receiving no intelligence from Mr. Toobad ; when one evening the latter rushed into the library, where the family and the visitors were assembled, vociferating, "The devil is come among you, having great wrath !" He then drew Mr. Glowry aside into another apartment, and after remaining some time together, they re-entered the library with faces of great dismay, but did not condescend to explain to any one the cause of their discomfiture.

The next morning, early, Mr. Toobad departed. Mr. Glowry sighed and groaned all day, and said not a word to any one. Scythrop had quarrelled, as usual, with Marionetta, and was enclosed in his tower, in a fit of morbid sensibility. Marionetta was comforting herself at the piano, with singing the airs of *Nina pazzo per amore* ; and the Honourable Mr. Listless was listening to the harmony, as he lay supine on the sofa, with a book in his hand, into which he peeped at intervals. The Reverend Mr. Larynx approached the sofa, and proposed a game at billiards.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Billiards ! Really I should be very happy ; but, in my present exhausted state, the exertion is too much for me. I do not know when I have been equal to such an effort. (*He rang the bell for his valet. Fatout entered.*) Fatout ! when did I play at billiards last ?

FATOUT.

De-fourteen December de last year, Monsieur. (*Fatout bowed and retired.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

So it was. Seven months ago. You sec, Mr. Larynx; you sec, sir. My nerves, Miss O'Carroll, my nerves are shattered. I have been advised to try Bath. Some of the faculty recommend Cheltenham. I think of trying both, as the seasons don't clash. The season, you know, Mr. Larynx—the season, Miss O'Carroll—the season is every thing.

MARIONETTA.

And health is something. *N'est-ce pas*, Mr. Larynx?

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

Most assuredly, Miss O'Carroll. For, however reasoners may dispute about the *summum bonum*, none of them will deny that a very good dinner is a very good thing: and what is a good dinner without a good appetite? and whence is a good appetite but from good health? Now, Cheltenham, Mr. Listless, is famous for good appetites.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

The best piece of logic I ever heard, Mr. Larynx; the very best, I assure you. I have thought very seriously of Cheltenham: very seriously and profoundly. I thought of it—let me see—when did I think of it? (*He rang again, and Fatout re-appeared.*) Fatout! when did I think of going to Cheltenham, and did not go?

FATOUT.

De Juillet twenty-von, de last summer, Monsieur. (*Fatout retired.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

So it was. An invaluable fellow that, Mr. Larynx—invaluable, Miss O'Carroll.

MARIONETTA.

So I should judge, indeed. He seems to serve you as a walking memory, and to be a living chronicle, not of your actions only, but of your thoughts.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

An excellent definition of the fellow, Miss O'Carroll,—

excellent, upon my honour. Ha! ha! he! Heigho! Laughter is pleasant, but the exertion is too much for me.

A parcel was brought in for Mr. Listless; it had been sent express. Fatout was summoned to unpack it; and it proved to contain a new novel, and a new poem, both of which had long been anxiously expected by the whole host of fashionable readers; and the last number of 'a popular Review, of which the editor and his coadjutors were in high favour at court, and enjoyed ample pensions* for their services to church and state. As Fatout left the room, Mr. Flosky entered, and curiously inspected the literary arrivals.

MR. FLOSKY.

(*Turning over the leaves.*) "Devilman, a novel." Hm. Hatred—revenge—misanthropy—and quotations from the Bible. Hm. This is the morbid anatomy of black bile.—"Paul Jones, a poem." Hm. I see how it is. Paul Jones, an amiable enthusiast—disappointed in his affections—turns pirate from ennui and magnanimity—cuts various masculine throats, wins various feminine hearts—is hanged at the yard-arm! The catastrophe is very awkward, and very unpoetical.—"The Downing Street Review." Hm. "First article—An Ode to the Red Book, by Roderick Sackbut, Esquire. Hm. His own poem reviewed by himself. Hm-m-m."

(*Mr. Flosky proceeded in silence to look over the other articles of the review; Marionetta inspected the novel, and Mr. Listless the poem.*)

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

For a young man of fashion and family, Mr. Listless, you seem to be of a very studious turn.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Studious! You are pleased to be facetious, Mr. Larynx. I hope you do not suspect me of being studious. I have finished my education. But there are some fashionable books that one must read, because they are ingredients

* "PENNSON. Pay given to a slave of state for treason to his country."—*JOHNSON'S Dictionary.*

of the talk of the day ; otherwise, I am no fonder of books than I dare say you yourself are, Mr. Larynx.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

Why, sir, I cannot say that I am indeed particularly fond of books ; yet neither can I say that I never do read. A tale or a poem, now and then, to a circle of ladies over their work, is no very heterodox employment of the vocal energy. And I must say, for myself, that few men have a more Job-like endurance of the eternally recurring questions and answers that interweave themselves, on these occasions, with the crisis of an adventure, and heighten the distress of a tragedy.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

And very often make the distress when the author has omitted it.

MARIONETTA.

I shall try your patience some rainy morning, Mr. Larynx ; and Mr. Listless shall recommend us the very newest new book, that every body reads.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

You shall receive it, Miss O'Carroll, with all the gloss of novelty ; fresh as a ripe green-gage in all the downiness of its bloom. A mail-coach copy from Edinburgh, forwarded express from London.

MR. FLOSKY.

This rage for novelty is the bane of literature. Except my works and those of my particular friends, nothing is good that is not as old as Jeremy Taylor : and, *entre nous*, the best parts of my friends' books were either written or suggested by myself.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Sir, I reverence you. But I must say, modern books are very consolatory and congenial to my feelings. There is, as it were, a delightful north-east wind, an intellectual blight breathing through them ; a delicious misanthropy and discontent, that demonstrates the nullity of virtue and

energy, and puts me in good humour with myself and my sofa.

MR. FLOSKY.

Very true, sir. Modern literature is a north-east wind — a blight of the human soul. I take credit to myself for having helped to make it so. The way to produce fine fruit is to blight the flower. You call this a paradox. Marry, so be it. Ponder thereon.

The conversation was interrupted by the re-appearance of Mr. Toobad, covered with mud. He just showed himself at the door, muttered "The devil is come among you!" and vanished. The road which connected Nightmare Abbey with the civilised world, was artificially raised above the level of the fens, and ran through them in a straight line as far as the eye could reach, with a ditch on each side, of which the water was rendered invisible by the aquatic vegetation that covered the surface. Into one of these ditches the sudden action of a shy horse, which took fright at a windmill, had precipitated the travelling chariot of Mr. Toobad, who had been reduced to the necessity of scrambling in dismal plight through the window. One of the wheels was found to be broken; and Mr. Toobad, leaving the postilion to get the chariot as well as he could to Claydyke for the purposes of cleaning and repairing, had walked back to Nightmare Abbey, followed by his servant with the imperial, and repeating all the way his favourite quotation from the Revelations:

CHAPTER VI.

MR. TOOBAD had found his daughter Celinda in London, and after the first joy of meeting was over, told her he had a husband ready for her. The young lady replied, very gravely, that she should take the liberty to choose for herself. Mr. Toobad said he saw the devil was determined to

interfere with all his projects, but he was resolved on his own part, not to have on his conscience the crime of passive obedience and non-resistance to Lucifer, and therefore she should marry the person he had chosen for her. Miss Toobad replied, *très posément*, she assuredly would not. "Celinda, Celinda," said Mr. Toobad, "you most assuredly shall." — "Have I not a fortune in my own right, sir?" said Celinda. "The more is the pity," said Mr. Toobad: "but I can find means, miss; I can find means. There are more ways than one of breaking in obstinate girls." They parted for the night with the expression of opposite resolutions, and in the morning the young lady's chamber was found empty, and what was become of her Mr. Toobad had no clue to conjecture. He continued to investigate town and country in search of her; visiting and revisiting Nightmare Abbey at intervals, to consult with his friend, Mr. Glowry. Mr. Glowry agreed with Mr. Toobad that this was a very flagrant instance of filial disobedience and rebellion; and Mr. Toobad declared, that when he discovered the fugitive, she should find that "the devil was come unto her, having great wrath."

In the evening, the whole party met, as usual, in the library. Marionetta sat at the harp; the Honourable Mr. Listless sat by her and turned over her music, though the exertion was almost too much for him. The Reverend Mr. Larynx relieved him occasionally in this delightful labour. Scythrop, tormented by the demon Jealousy, sat in the corner biting his lips and fingers. Marionetta looked at him every now and then with a smile of most provoking good humour, which he pretended not to see, and which only the more exasperated his troubled spirit. He took down a volume of Dante, and pretended to be deeply interested in the Purgatorio, though he knew not a word he was reading, as Marionetta was well aware; who, tripping across the room, peeped into his book, and said to him, "I see you are in the middle of Purgatory."—"I am in the middle of hell," said Scythrop furiously. "Are you?" said she; "then come across the room, and I will sing you the finale of Don Giovanni."

"Let me alone," said Scythrop. Marionetta looked at

him with a deprecating smile, and said, "You unjust, cross creature, you." — "Let me alone," said Scythrop, but much less emphatically than at first, and by no means wishing to be taken at his word. Marionetta left him immediately, and returning to the harp, said, just loud enough for Scythrop to hear — "Did you ever read Dante, Mr. Listless? Scythrop is reading Dante, and is just now in Purgatory." — "And I," said the Honourable Mr. Listless, "am not reading Dante, and am just now in Paradise," bowing to Marionetta.

MARIONETTA.

You are very gallant, Mr. Listless; and I dare say you are very fond of reading Dante.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

I don't know how it is, but Dante never came in my way till lately. I never had him in my collection, and if I had had him I should not have read him. But I find he is growing fashionable, and I am afraid I must read him some wet morning.

MARIONETTA.

No, read him some evening, by all means. Were you ever in love, Mr. Listless?

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

I assure you, Miss O'Carroll, never — till I came to Nightmare Abbey. I dare say it is very pleasant; but it seems to give so much trouble that I fear the exertion would be too much for me.

MARIONETTA.

Shall I teach you a compendious method of courtship, that will give you no trouble whatever?

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

You will confer on me an inexpressible obligation. I am all impatience to learn it.

MARIONETTA.

Sit with your back to the lady and read Dante; only be sure to begin in the middle, and turn over three or four pages at once — backwards as well as forwards, and she

will immediately perceive that you are desperately in love with her — desperately.

(The Honourable Mr. Listless sitting between Scythrop and Marionetta, and fixing all his attention on the beautiful speaker, did not observe Scythrop, who was doing as she described.)

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

You are pleased to be facetious, Miss O'Carroll. The lady would infallibly conclude that I was the greatest brute in town.

MARIONETTA

Far from it. She would say, perhaps, some people have odd methods of showing their affection.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

But I should think, with submission —

MR. FLOSKY. *(Joining them from another part of the room.)*

Did I not hear Mr. Listless observe that Dante is becoming fashionable?

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

I did hazard a remark to that effect, Mr. Flosky, though I speak on such subjects with a consciousness of my own nothingness, in the presence of so great a man as Mr. Flosky. I know not what is the colour of Dante's devils, but as he is certainly becoming fashionable I conclude they are blue; for the blue devils, as it seems to me, Mr. Flosky, constitute the fundamental feature of fashionable literature.

MR. FLOSKY.

The blue arc, indeed, the staple commodity; but as they will not always be commanded, the black, red, and grey may be admitted as substitutes. Tea, late dinners, and the French Revolution, have played the devil, Mr. Listless, and brought the devil into play.

MR. TOOBAD *(starting up)*.

Having great wrath.

MR. FLOSKY.

This is no play upon words, but the sober sadness of veritable fact.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Tea, late dinners, and the French Revolution. I cannot exactly see the connection of ideas.

MR. FLOSKY.

I shou'd be sorry if you could ; I pity the man who can see the connection of his own ideas. Still more do I pity him, the connection of whose ideas any other person can see. Sir, the great evil is, that there is too much commonplace light in our moral and political literature ; and light is a great enemy to mystery, and mystery is a great friend to enthusiasm. Now the enthusiasm for abstract truth is an exceedingly fine thing, as long as the truth, which is the object of the enthusiasm, is so completely abstract as to be altogether out of the reach of the human faculties ; and, in that sense, I have myself an enthusiasm for truth, but in no other, for the pleasure of metaphysical investigation lies in the means, not in the end ; and if the end could be found, the pleasure of the means would cease. The mind, to be kept in health, must be kept in exercise. The proper exercise of the mind is elaborate reasoning. Analytical reasoning is a base and mechanical process, which takes to pieces and examines, bit by bit, the rude material of knowledge, and extracts therefrom a few hard and obstinate things called facts, every thing in the shape of which I cordially hate. But synthetical reasoning, setting up as its goal some unattainable abstraction, like an imaginary quantity in algebra, and commencing its course with taking for granted some two assertions which cannot be proved, from the union of these two assumed truths produces a third assumption, and so on in infinite series, to the unspeakable benefit of the human intellect. The beauty of this process is, that at every step it strikes out into two branches, in a compound ratio of ramification ; so that you are perfectly sure of losing your way, and keeping your mind in perfect health, by the perpetual exercise of an interminable quest ;

and for these reasons I have christened my eldest son Emanuel Kant Flosky..

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

Nothing can be more luminous.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

And what has all that to do with Dante, and the blue devils?

MR. HILARY.

Not much, I should think, with Dante, but a great deal with the blue devils.

MR. FLOSKY.

It is very certain, and much to be rejoiced at, that our literature is hag-ridden. Tea has shattered our nerves; late dinners make us slaves of indigestion; the French Revolution has made us shrink from the name of philosophy, and has destroyed, in the more refined part of the community (of which number I am one), all enthusiasm for political liberty. That part of the *reading public* which shuns the solid food of reason for the light diet of fiction, requires a perpetual adhibition of *sauce piquante* to the palate of its depraved imagination. It lived upon ghosts, goblins, and skeletons (I and my friend Mr. Sackbut served up a few of the best), till even the devil himself, though magnified to the size of Mount Athos, became too base, common, and popular, for its surfeited appetite. The ghosts have therefore been laid, and the devil has been cast into outer darkness, and now the delight of our spirits is to dwell on all the vices and blackest passions of our nature, tricked out in a masquerade dress of heroism and disappointed benevolence; the whole secret of which lies in forming combinations that contradict all our experience, and affixing the purple shred of some particular virtue to that precise character, in which we should be most certain not to find it in the living world; and making this single virtue not only redeem all the real and manifest vices of the character, but make them actually pass for necessary adjuncts, and indispensable accompaniments and characteristics of the said virtue.

MR. TOOBAD.

That is, because the devil is come among us, and finds it for his interest to destroy all our perceptions of the distinctions of right and wrong.

MARIONETTA.

I do not precisely enter into your meaning, Mr. Flosky, and should be glad if you would make it a little more plain to me.

MR. FLOSKY.

One or two examples will do it, Miss O'Carroll. If I were to take all the mean and sordid qualities of a money-dealing Jew, and tack on to them, as with a nail, the quality of extreme benevolence, I should have a very decent hero for a modern novel; and should contribute my quota to the fashionable method of administering a mass of vice, under a thin and unnatural covering of virtue, like a spider wrapt in a bit of gold leaf, and administered as a wholesome pill. On the same principle, if a man knocks me down, and takes my purse and watch by main force, I turn him to account, and set him forth in a tragedy as a dashing young fellow, disinherited for his romantic generosity, and full of a most amiable hatred of the world in general, and his own country in particular, and of a most enlightened and chivalrous affection for himself: then, with the addition of a wild girl to fall in love with him, and a series of adventures in which they break all the Ten Commandments in succession (always, you will observe, for some sublime motive, which must be carefully analysed in its progress), I have as amiable a pair of tragic characters as ever issued from that new region of the belles lettres, which I have called the Morbid Anatomy of Black Bile, and which is greatly to be admired and rejoiced at, as affording a fine scope for the exhibition of mental power.

MR. HILARY.

Which is about as well employed as the power of a hot-house would be in forcing up a nettle to the size of an elm. If we go on in this way, we shall have a new art of poetry, of which one of the first rules will be: To

remember to forget that there are any such things as sunshine and music in the world.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

It seems to be the case with us at present, or we should not have interrupted Miss O'Carroll's music with this exceedingly dry conversation.

MR. FLOSKY.

I should be most happy if Miss O'Carroll would remind us that there are yet both music and sunshine —

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

In the voice and the smile of beauty. May I entreat the favour of — (*turning over the pages of music.*)

All were silent, and Marionetta sung : —

Why are thy looks so blank, grey friar ?

Why are thy looks so blue ?

Thou seem'st more pale and lank, grey friar,

Than thou wast used to do : —

Say, what has made thee rue ?

Thy form was plump, and a light did shine

In thy round and ruby face.

Which showed an outward visible sign

Of an inward spiritual grace : —

Say, what has changed thy case ?

Yet will I tell thee true, grey friar,

I very well can see,

That, if thy looks are blue, grey friar,

'T is all for love of me, —

'T is all for love of me.

But breathe not thy vows to me, grey friar,

Oh, breathe them not, I pray ;

For ill becoms in a reverend friar,

The love of a mortal may ;

And I needs must say thee nay.

But, could'st thou think my heart to move

With that pale and silent scowl ?

Know, he who would win a maiden's love,

Whether clad in cap or cowl,

Must be more of a lark than an owl.

Scythrop immediately replaced Dante on the shelf, and joined the circle round the beautiful singer. Marionetta gave him a smile of approbation that fully restored his complacency, and they continued on the best possible terms during the remainder of the evening. The Honourable Mr. Listless turned over the leaves with double alacrity, saying, " You are severe upon invalids, Miss O'Carroll :

to escape your satire, I must try to be sprightly, though the exertion is too much for me."

CHAPTER VII.

A NEW visitor arrived at the Abbey, in the person of Mr. Asterias, the ichthyologist. This gentleman had passed his life in seeking the living wonders of the deep through the four quarters of the world; he had a cabinet of stuffed and dried fishes, of shells, sea-weeds, corals, and madre-pores, that was the admiration and envy of the Royal Society. He had penetrated into the watery den of the Sepia Octopus, disturbed the conjugal happiness of that turtle-dove of the ocean, and come off victorious in a sanguinary conflict. He had been becalmed in the tropical seas, and had watched, in eager expectation, though unhappily always in vain, to see the colossal polypus rise from the water, and entwine its enormous arms round the masts and the rigging. He maintained the origin of all things from water, and insisted that the polypodes were the first of animated things, and that, from their round bodies and many-shooting arms, the Hindoos had taken their gods, the most ancient of deities. But the chief object of his ambition, the end and aim of his researches, was to discover a triton and a mermaid, the existence of which he most potently and implicitly believed, and was prepared to demonstrate, *à priori*, *à posteriori*, *à fortiori*, synthetically and analytically, syllogistically and inductively, by arguments deduced both from acknowledged facts and plausible hypotheses. A report that a mermaid had been seen "sleeking her soft alluring locks" on the sea-coast of Lincolnshire, had brought him in great haste from London, to pay a long-promised and often-postponed visit to his old acquaintance, Mr. Glowry.

Mr. Asterias was accompanied by his son, to whom he had given the name of Aquarius—flattering himself that

he would, in the process of time, become a constellation among the stars of ichthyological science. What charitable female had lent him the mould in which this son was cast, no one pretended to know; and, as he never dropped the most distant allusion to Aquarius's mother, some of the wags of London maintained that he had received the favours of a mermaid, and that the scientific perquisitions which kept him always prowling about the sea-shore, were directed by the less philosophical motive of regaining his lost love.

Mr. Asterias perlustrated the sea-coast for several days, and reaped disappointment, but not despair. One night, shortly after his arrival, he was sitting in one of the windows of the library, looking towards the sea, when his attention was attracted by a figure which was moving near the edge of the surf, and which was dimly visible through the moonless summer night. Its motions were irregular, like those of a person in a state of indecision. It had extremely long hair, which floated in the wind. Whatever else it might be, it certainly was not a fisherman. It might be a lady; but it was neither Mrs. Hilary nor Miss O'Carroll, for they were both in the library. It might be one of the female servants; but it had too much grace, and too striking an air of habitual liberty, to render it probable. Besides, what should one of the female servants be doing there at this hour, moving to and fro, as it seemed, without any visible purpose? It could scarcely be a stranger; for Claydyke, the nearest village, was ten miles distant; and what female would come ten miles across the fens, for no purpose but to hover over the surf under the walls of Nightmare Abbey? Might it not be a mermaid? It was possibly a mermaid. It was probably a mermaid. It was very probably a mermaid. Nay, what else could it be but a mermaid? It certainly was a mermaid. Mr. Asterias stole out of the library on tiptoe, with his finger on his lips, having beckoned Aquarius to follow him.

The rest of the party was in great surprise at Mr. Asterias's movement, and some of them approached the window to see if the locality would tend to elucidate the mystery. Presently they saw him and Aquarius cautiously

stealing along on the other side of the moat, but they saw nothing more ; and Mr. Asterias returning, told them, with accents of great disappointment, that he had had a glimpse of a mermaid, but she had eluded him in the darkness, and was gone, he presumed, to sup with some enamoured triton, in a submarine grotto.

“ But, seriously, Mr. Asterias,” said the Honourable Mr. Listless, “ do you positively believe there are such things as mermaids ? ”

MR. ASTERIAS.

Most assuredly ; and tritons too.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

What ! things that are half human and half fish ?

MR. ASTERIAS.

Precisely. They are the oran-outangs of the sea. But I am persuaded that there are also complete sea men, differing in no respect from us, but that they are stupid, and covered with scales ; for, though our organisation seems to exclude us essentially from the class of amphibious animals, yet anatomists well know that the *foramen ovale* may remain open in an adult, and that respiration is, in that case, not necessary to life : and how can it be otherwise explained that the Indian divers, employed in the pearl fishery, pass whole hours under the water ; and that the famous Swedish gardener of Troningsholm lived a day and a half under the ice without being drowned ? A mermaid, or mermaid, was taken in the year 1403 in a Dutch lake, and was in every respect like a French woman, except that she did not speak. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, an English ship, a hundred and fifty leagues from land, in the Greenland seas, discovered a flotilla of sixty or seventy little skiffs, in each of which was a triton, or sea man : at the approach of the English vessel the whole of them, seized with simultaneous fear, disappeared, skiffs and all, under the water, as if they had been a human variety of the nautilus. The illustrious Don Feijoo has preserved an authentic and well-attested story of a young Spaniard, named Francis de la Vega, who, bathing with some of his friends in June, 1674, suddenly dived under the sea and rose no more. His friends thought

him drowned : they were plebeians and pious Catholics ; but a philosopher might very legitimately have drawn the same conclusion.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

— Nothing could be more logical.

MR. ASTERIAS.

Five years afterwards, some fishermen near Cadiz found in their nets a triton, or sea man ; they spoke to him in several languages —

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

They were very learned fishermen.

MR. HILARY.

They had the gift of tongues by especial favour of their brother fisherman, Saint Peter.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Is Saint Peter the tutelar saint of Cadiz ?

(None of the company could answer this question, and Mr. ASTERIAS proceeded.)

They spoke to him in several languages, but he was as mute as a fish. They handed him over to some holy friars, who exorcised him ; but the devil was mute too. After some days he pronounced the name Lierganes. A monk took him to that village. His mother and brothers recognised and embraced him ; but he was as insensible to their caresses as any other fish would have been. He had some scales on his body, which dropped off by degrees ; but his skin was as hard and rough as shagreen. He stayed at home nine years, without recovering his speech or his reason : he then disappeared again ; and one of his old acquaintance, some years after, saw him pop his head out of the water near the coast of the Asturias. These facts were certified by his brothers, and by Don Gaspardo de la Riba Aguero, Knight of Saint James, who lived near Lierganes, and often had the pleasure of our triton's company to dinner. — Pliny mentions an embassy of the Olyssiponians to Tiberius, to give him intelligence of a triton which had been heard playing on its shell in a certain cave ; with several other authenticated facts on the subject of tritons and nereids.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

You astonish me. I have been much on the sea-shore, in the season, but I do not think I ever saw a mermaid. (*He rang, and summoned Fatout, who made his appearance half-seas-over.*) Fatout! did I ever see a mermaid?

FATOUT.

Mermaid! mer-r-m-m-aid! Ah! merry maid! Oui, monsieur! Yes, sir, very many. I vish dere vas von or two here in de kitchen — ma foi! Dey be all as melancholic as so many tombstone.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

I mean, Fatout, an odd kind of human fish.

FATOUT.

De odd fish! Ah, oui! I understand de phrase: ve have seen nothing else since ve left town — ma foi!

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

You seem to have a cup too much, sir.

FATOUT.

Non, monsieur: de cup too little. De fen be very un-wholesome, and I drink-a-de ponch vid Raven de butler, to keep out de bad air.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Fatout! I insist on your being sober.

FATOUT:

Oui, monsieur; I vil be as sober as de révérendissime père Jean. I should be ver glad of de merry maid; but de butler be de odd fish, and he swim in de bowl de ponch. Ah! ah! I do recollect de leetle-a song: — “About fair maids, and about fair maids, and about my merry maids all.” (*Fatout reeled out, singing.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

I am overwhelmed: I never saw the rascal in such a condition before. But will you allow me, Mr. Asterias, to inquire into the *cui bono* of all the pains and expense you have incurred to discover a mermaid? The *cui bono*, sir, is the question I always take the liberty to ask when I see any one taking much trouble for any object. I am myself a sort of Signor Pococurante, and should like to know if

there be any thing better or pleasanter, than the state of existing and doing nothing?

MR. ASTENIAS.

I have made many voyages, Mr. Listless, to remote and barren shores : I have travelled over desert and inhospitable lands : I have defied danger — I have endured fatigue — I have submitted to privation. In the midst of these I have experienced pleasures which I would not at any time have exchanged for that of existing and doing nothing. I have known many evils, but I have never known the worst of all, which, as it seems to me, are those which are comprehended in the inexhaustible varieties of *ennui* : spleen, chagrin, vapours, blue devils, time-killing, discontent, misanthropy, and all their interminable train of fretfulness, querulousness, suspicious, jealousies, and fears, which have alike infected society, and the literature of society ; and which would make an arctic ocean of the human mind, if the more humane pursuits of philosophy and science did not keep alive the better feelings and more valuable energies of our nature.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

You are pleased to be severe upon our fashionable belles lettres.

MR. ASTERIAS.

Surely not without reason, when pirates, highwaymen, and other varieties of the extensive genus Marauder, are the only *beau idéal* of the active, as splenetic and railing misanthropy is of the speculative energy. A gloomy brow and a tragical voice seem to have been of late the characteristics of fashionable manners : and a morbid, withering, deadly, antisocial sirocco, loaded with moral and political despair, breathes through all the groves and valleys of the modern Parnassus ; while science moves on in the calm dignity of its course, affording to youth delights equally pure and vivid — to maturity, calm and grateful occupation — to old age, the most pleasing recollections and inexhaustible materials of agreeable and salutary reflection ; and, while its votary enjoys the disinterested pleasure of enlarging the intellect and increasing the comforts of society.

he is himself independent of the caprices of human intercourse and the accidents of human fortune. Nature is his great and inexhaustible treasure.* His days are always too short for his enjoyment : *ennui* is a stranger to his door. At peace with the world and with his own mind, he suffices to himself, makes all around him happy, and the close of his pleasing and beneficial existence is the evening of a beautiful day.*

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Really I should like very well to lead such a life myself, but the exertion would be too much for me. Besides, I have been at college. I contrive to get through my day by sinking the morning in bed, and killing the evening in company ; dressing and dining in the intermediate space, and stopping the chinks and crevices of the few vacant moments that remain with a little easy reading. And that amiable discontent and antisociality which you reprobate in our present drawing-room-table literature, I find, I do assure you, a very fine mental tonic, which reconciles me to my favourite pursuit of doing nothing, by showing me that nobody is worth doing any thing for.

MARIONETTA.

But is there not in such compositions a kind of unconscious self-detection, which seems to carry their own antidote with them ? For surely no one who cordially and truly either hates or despises the world will publish a volume every three months to say so.

MR. FLOSKY.

There is a secret in all this, which I will elucidate with a dusky remark. According to Berkeley, the *esse* of things is *percipi*. They exist as they are perceived. But, leaving for the present, as far as relates to the material world, the materialists, hyloists, and antihyloists, to settle this point among them, which is indeed

A subtle question, raised among
Those out o' their wits, and those i' the wrong :

for only we transcendentalists are in the right : we may very safely assert that the *esse* of happiness is *percipi*.

* See Denys Montfort : *Histoire Naturelle des Mollusques ; Vues Générales*, pp. 37, 38.

It exists as it is perceived. "It is the mind that maketh well or ill." The elements of pleasure and pain are every where. The degree of happiness that any circumstances or objects can confer on us depends on the mental disposition with which we approach them. If you consider what is meant by the common phrases, a happy disposition and a discontented temper, you will perceive that the truth for which I am contending is universally admitted.

(Mr. Flosky suddenly stopped : he found himself unintentionally trespassing within the limits of common sense.)

MR. HILARY.

It is very true ; a happy disposition finds materials of enjoyment every where. In the city, or the country — in society, or in solitude — in the theatre, or the forest — in the hum of the multitude, or in the silence of the mountains, are alike materials of reflection and elements of pleasure. It is one mode of pleasure to listen to the music of "Don Giovanni," in a theatre glittering with light, and crowded with elegance and beauty : it is another to glide at sunset over the bosom of a lonely lake, where no sound disturbs the silence but the motion of the boat through the waters. A happy disposition derives pleasure from both, a discontented temper from neither, but is always busy in detecting deficiencies, and feeding dissatisfaction with comparisons. The one gathers all the flowers, the other all the nettles, in its path. The one has the faculty of enjoying every thing, the other of enjoying nothing. The one realises all the pleasure of the present good ; the other converts it into pain, by pining after something better, which is only better because it is not present, and which, if it were present, would not be enjoyed. These morbid spirits are in life what professed critics are in literature ; they see nothing but faults, because they are predetermined to shut their eyes to beauties. The critic does his utmost to blight genius in its infancy ; that which rises in spite of him he will not see ; and then he complains of the decline of literature. In like manner,

these cankers of society complain of human nature and society, when they have wilfully debarred themselves from all the good they contain, and done their utmost to blight their own happiness and that of all around them. Misanthropy is sometimes the product of disappointed benevolence ; but it is more frequently the offspring of overweening and mortified vanity, quarrelling with the world for not being better treated than it deserves.

SCYTHROP (*to Marionetta*).

These remarks are rather uncharitable. There is great good in human nature, but it is at present ill-conditioned. Ardent spirits cannot but be dissatisfied with things as they are : and, according to their views of the probabilities of amelioration, they will rush into the extremes of either hope or despair — of which the first is enthusiasm, and the second misanthropy ; but their sources in this case are the same, as the Severn and the Wye run in different directions, and both rise in Plinlimmon.

MARIONETTA.

“ And there is salmon in both ; ” for the resemblance is about as close as that between Macedon and Monmouth.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARIONETTA observed the next day a remarkable perturbation in Scythrop, for which she could not imagine any probable cause. She was willing to believe at first that it had some transient and trifling source, and would pass off in a day or two ; but, contrary to this expectation, it daily increased. She was well aware that Scythrop had a strong tendency to the love of mystery, for its own sake ; that is to say, he would employ mystery to serve a purpose, but would first choose his purpose by its capability of mystery. He seemed now to have more mystery on his hands than the laws of the system allowed, and to wear his coat of darkness with an air of great discomfort. All her little

playful arts lost by degrees much of their power; either to irritate or to soothe; and the first perception of her diminished influence produced in her an immediate depression of spirits, and a consequent sadness of demeanour, that rendered her very interesting to Mr. Glowry; who, duly considering the improbability of accomplishing his wishes with respect to Miss Toobad (which improbability naturally increased in the diurnal ratio of that young lady's absence), began to reconcile himself by degrees to the idea of Marionetta being his daughter.

Marionetta made many ineffectual attempts to extract from Scythrop the secret of his mystery; and, in despair of drawing it from himself, began to form hopes that she might find a clue to it from Mr. Flosky, who was Scythrop's dearest friend, and was more frequently than any other person admitted to his solitary tower. Mr. Flosky, however, had ceased to be visible in a morning. He was engaged in the composition of a dismal ballad; and, Marionetta's uneasiness overcoming her scruples of decorum, she determined to seek him in the apartment which he had chosen for his study. She tapped at the door, and at the sound "Come in," entered the apartment. It was noon, and the sun was shining in full splendour, much to the annoyance of Mr. Flosky, who had obviated the inconvenience by closing the shutters, and drawing the window-curtains. He was sitting at his table by the light of a solitary candle, with a pen in one hand, and a muffinercer in the other, with which he occasionally sprinkled salt on the wick, to make it burn blue. He sat with "his eye in a fine frenzy rolling," and turned his inspired gaze on Marionetta as if she had been the ghastly ladie of a magical vision; then placed his hand before his eyes, with an appearance of manifest pain — shook his head — withdrew his hand — rubbed his eyes, like a waking man — and said, in a tone of ruefulness most jeremitylorically pathetic, "To what am I to attribute this very unexpected pleasure, my dear Miss O'Carroll?"

MARIONETTA.

I must apologise for intruding on you, Mr. Flosky; but

the interest which I — you — take in my cousin Scythrop —

MR. FLOSKY.

Pardon me, Miss O'Carroll; I do not take any interest in any person or thing on the face of the earth; which sentiment, if you analyse it, you will find to be the quintessence of the most refined philanthropy.

MARIONETTA.

I will take it for granted that it is so, Mr. Flosky; I am not conversant with metaphysical subtleties, but —

MR. FLOSKY.

Subtleties! my dear Miss O'Carroll. I am sorry to find you participating in the vulgar error of the *reading public*, to whom an unusual collocation of words, involving a juxtaposition of antiperistatistical ideas, immediately suggests the notion of hyperoxysophistical paradoxology.

MARIONETTA.

Indeed, Mr. Flosky, it suggests no such notion to me. I have sought you for the purpose of obtaining information.

MR. FLOSKY (*shaking his head*).

No one ever sought me for such a purpose before.

MARIONETTA.

I think, Mr. Flosky — that is, I believe — that is, I fancy — that is, I imagine —

MR. FLOSKY.

The *ταύτισσι*, the *id est*, the *cioè*, the *c'est à dire*, the *that is*, my dear Miss O'Carroll, is not applicable in this case — if you will permit me to take the liberty of saying so. Think is not synonymous with believe — for belief, in many most important particulars, results from the total absence, the absolute negation of thought, and is thereby the sane and orthodox condition of mind; and thought and belief are both essentially different from fancy, and fancy, again, is distinct from imagination. This distinction between fancy and imagination is one of the most abstruse and important points of metaphysics. I have

written seven hundred pages of promise to elucidate it, which promise I shall keep as faithfully as the bank will its promise to pay.

MARIONETTA.

I assure you, Mr. Flosky, I care no more about metaphysics than I do about the bank ; and, if you will condescend to talk to a simple girl in intelligible terms —

MR. FLOSKY.

Say not condescend ! Know you not that you talk to the most humble of men, to one who has buckled on the armour of sanctity, and clothed himself with humility as with a garment ?

MARIONETTA.

My cousin Scythrop has of late had an air of mystery about him, which gives me great uneasiness.

MR. FLOSKY.

That is strange : nothing is so becoming to a man as an air of mystery. Mystery is the very key-stone of all that is beautiful in poetry, all that is sacred in faith, and all that is recondite in transcendental psychology. I am writing a ballad which is all mystery ; it is “ such stuff as dreams are made of,” and is, indeed, stuff made of a dream ; for, last night I fell asleep as usual over my book, and had a vision of pure reason. I composed five hundred lines in my sleep ; so that, having had a dream of a ballad, I am now officiating as my own Peter Quince, and making a ballad of my dream, and it shall be called Bottom’s Dream, because it has no bottom.

MARIONETTA.

I see, Mr. Flosky, you think my intrusion unseasonable, and are inclined to punish it, by talking nonsense to me. (*Mr. Flosky gave a start at the word nonsense, which almost overturned the table.*) I assure you, I would not have intruded if I had not been very much interested in the question I wish to ask you. — (*Mr. Flosky listened in sullen dignity.*) — My cousin Scythrop seems to have some secret preying on his mind. — (*Mr. Flosky was silent.*) — He seems very unhappy — Mr. Flosky. — Per-

haps you are acquainted with the cause. — (*Mr. Flosky was still silent.*) — I only wish to know — Mr. Flosky — if it is any thing — that could be remedied by any thing — that any one — of whom I know any thing — could do.

MR. FLOSKY (*after a pause*).

There are various ways of getting at secrets. The most approved methods, as recommended both theoretically and practically in philosophical novels, are eaves-dropping at key-holes, picking the locks of chests and desks, peeping into letters, steaming wafers, and insinuating hot wire under sealing wax; none of which methods I hold it lawful to practise.

MARIONETTA.

Surely, Mr. Flosky, you cannot suspect me of wishing to adopt or encourage such base and contemptible arts.

MR. FLOSKY.

Yet are they recommended, and with well-strung reasons, by writers of gravity and note, as simple and easy methods of studying character, and gratifying that laudable curiosity which aims at the knowledge of man.

MARIONETTA.

I am as ignorant of this morality which you do not approve, as of the metaphysics which you do: I should be glad to know by your means, what is the matter with my cousin; I do not like to see him unhappy, and I suppose there is some reason for it.

MR. FLOSKY.

Now I should rather suppose there is no reason for it: it is the fashion to be unhappy. To have a reason for being so would be exceedingly common-place: to be so without any is the province of genius: the art of being miserable for misery's sake, has been brought to great perfection in our days; and the ancient *Odyssey*, which held forth a shining example of the endurance of real misfortune, will give place to a modern one, setting out a more instructive picture of querulous impatience under imaginary evils.

MARIONETTA.

Will you oblige me, Mr. Flosky, by giving me a plain answer to a plain question?

MR. FLOSKY.

It is impossible, my dear Miss O'Carroll. I never gave a plain answer to a question in my life.

MARIONETTA.

Do you, or do you not, know what is the matter with my cousin?

MR. FLOSKY.

To say that I do not know, would be to say that I am ignorant of something; and God forbid, that a transcendental metaphysician, who has pure anticipated cognitions of every thing, and carries the whole science of geometry in his head without ever having looked into Euclid, should fall into so empirical an error as to declare himself ignorant of any thing: to say that I do know, would be to pretend to positive and circumstantial knowledge touching present matter of fact, which, when you consider the nature of evidence, and the various lights in which the same thing may be seen —

MARIONETTA.

I see, Mr. Flosky, that either you have no information, or are determined not to impart it; and I beg your pardon for having given you this unnecessary trouble.

MR. FLOSKY.

My dear Miss O'Carroll, it would have given me great pleasure to have said any thing that would have given you pleasure; but if any person living could make report of having obtained any information on any subject from Ferdinando Flosky, my transcendental reputation would be ruined for ever.

CHAPTER IX.

SEXTHORP grew every day more reserved, mysterious, and *distrain*; and gradually lengthened the duration of his

diurnal seclusions in his tower. Marionetta thought she perceived in all this very manifest symptoms of a warm love cooling.

It was seldom that she found herself alone with him in the morning, and, on these occasions, if she was silent in the hope of his speaking first, not a syllable would he utter; if she spoke to him indirectly, he assented monosyllabically; if she questioned him, his answers were brief, constrained, and evasive. Still, though her spirits were depressed, her playfulness had not so totally forsaken her, but that it illuminated at intervals the gloom of Nightmare Abbey; and if, on any occasion, she observed in Scythrop tokens of unextinguished or returning passion, her love of tormenting her lover immediately got the better both of her grief and her sympathy, though not of her curiosity, which Scythrop seemed determined not to satisfy. This playfulness, however, was in a great measure artificial, and usually vanished with the irritable Strephon, to whose annoyance it had been exerted. The Genius Loci, the *tutela* of Nightmare Abbey, the spirit of black melancholy, began to set his seal on her pallescent countenance. Scythrop perceived the change, found his tender sympathies awakened, and did his utmost to comfort the afflicted damsel, assuring her that his seeming inattention had only proceeded from his being involved in a profound meditation on a very hopeful scheme for the regeneration of human society. Marionetta called him ungrateful, cruel, cold-hearted, and accompanied her reproaches with many sobs and tears: poor Scythrop growing every moment more soft and submissive—till, at length, he threw himself at her feet, and declared that no competition of beauty, however dazzling, genius, however transcendent, talents, however cultivated, or philosophy, however enlightened, should ever make him renounce his divine Marionetta.

“Competition!” thought Marionetta, and suddenly, with an air of the most freezing indifference, she said, “You are perfectly at liberty, sir, to do as you please; I beg you will follow your own plans, without any reference to me.”

Scythrop was confounded. What was become of all her passion and her tears? Still kneeling, he kissed her hand with rucful timility, and said, in most pathetic accents, "Do you not love me, Marionetta?"

"No," said Marionetta, with a look of cold composure: "No." Scythrop still looked up incredulously. "No, I tell you."

"Oh! very well, madam," said Scythrop, rising, "if that is the case, there are those in the world ——"

"To be sure there are, sir; — and do you suppose I do not see through your designs, you ungenerous monster?"

"My designs? Marionetta!"

"Yes, your designs, Scythrop. You have come here to cast me off, and artfully contrive that it should appear to be my doing, and not yours, thinking to quiet your tender conscience with this pitiful stratagem. But do not suppose that you are of so much consequence to me: do not suppose it: you are of no consequence to me at all — none at all: therefore, leave me: I renounce you: leave me; why do you not leave me?"

Scythrop endeavoured to remonstrate, but without success. She reiterated her injunctions to him to leave her, till, in the simplicity of his spirit, he was preparing to comply. When he had nearly reached the door, Marionetta said, "Farewell." Scythrop looked back. "Farewell, Scythrop," she repeated, "you will never see me again."

"Never see you again, Marionetta?"

"I shall go from hence to-morrow, perhaps to-day; and before we meet again, one of us will be married, and we might as well be dead, you know, Scythrop."

The sudden change of her voice in the last few words, and the burst of tears that accompanied them, acted like electricity on the tender-hearted youth; and, in another instant, a complete reconciliation was accomplished without the intervention of words.

There are, indeed, some learned casuists, who maintain that love has no language, and that all the misunderstandings and dissensions of lovers arise from the fatal habit of employing words on a subject to which words are inappli-

cable ; that love, beginning with looks, that is to say, with the physiognomical expression of congenial mental dispositions, tends through a regular gradation of signs and symbols of affection, to that consummation which is most devoutly to be wished ; and that it neither is necessary that there should be, nor probable that there would be, a single word spoken from first to last between two sympathetic spirits, were it not that the arbitrary institutions of society have raised, at every step of this very simple process, so many complicated impediments and barriers in the shape of settlements and ceremonies, parents and guardians, lawyers, Jew-brokers, and parsons, that many an adventurous knight (who, in order to obtain the conquest of the Hesperian fruit, is obliged to fight his way through all these monsters,) is either repulsed at the onset, or vanquished before the achievement of his enterprise : and such a quantity of unnatural talking is rendered inevitably necessary through all the stages of the progression, that the tender and volatile spirit of love often takes flight on the pinions of some of the *πτερά πτερόεντα*, or *winged words*, which are pressed into his service in despite of himself.

At this conjuncture, Mr. Glowry entered, and sitting down near them, said, "I see how it is ; and, as we are all sure to be miserable do what we may, there is no need of taking pains to make one another more so ; therefore, with God's blessing and mine, there" — joining their hands as he spoke.

Scythrop was not exactly prepared for this decisive step ; but he could only stammer out, "Really, sir, you are too good ;" and Mr. Glowry departed to bring Mr. Hilary to ratify the act.

Now, whatever truth there may be in the theory of love and language, of which we have so recently spoken, certain it is, that during Mr. Glowry's absence, which lasted half an hour, not a single word was said by either Scythrop or Marionetta.

Mr. Glowry returned with Mr. Hilary, who was delighted at the prospect of so advantageous an establishment for his orphan niece, of whom he considered himself in

some manner the guardian, and nothing remained, as Mr. Glowry observed, but to fix the day.

Marionetta blushed, and was silent. Scythrop was also silent for a time, and at length hesitatingly said, "My dear sir, your goodness overpowers me ; but really you are so precipitate."

Now, this remark, if the young lady had made it, would, whether she thought it or not — for sincerity is a thing of no account on these occasions, nor indeed on any other, according to Mr. Flosky — this remark, if the young lady had made it, would have been perfectly *comme il faut* ; but, being made by the young gentleman, it was *toute autre chose*, and was, indeed, in the eyes of his mistress, a most heinous and irremissible offence. Marionetta was angry, very angry, but she concealed her anger, and said, calmly and coldly, "Certainly, you are much too precipitate, Mr. Glowry. I assure you, sir, I have by no means made up my mind ; and, indeed, as far as I know it, it inclines the other way ; but it will be quite time enough to think of these matters seven years hence." Before surprise permitted reply, the young lady had locked herself up in her own apartment.

"Why Scythrop," said Mr. Glowry, elongating his face exceedingly, "the devil is come among us sure enough, as Mr. Toobad observes : I thought you and Marionetta were both of a mind."

"So we are, I believe, sir," said Scythrop, gloomily, and stalked away to his tower.

"Mr. Glowry," said Mr. Hilary, "I do not very well understand all this."

"Whims, brother Hilary," said Mr. Glowry ; "some little foolish love quarrel, nothing more. Whims, freaks, April showers. They will be blown over by to-morrow."

"If not," said Mr. Hilary, "these April showers have made us April fools."

"Ah !" said Mr. Glowry, "you are a happy man, and in all your afflictions you can console yourself with a joke, let it be ever so bad, provided you crack it yourself. I should be very happy to laugh with you, if it would give you any satisfaction ; but, really, at present, my heart is

so sad, that I find it impossible to levy a contribution on my muscles."

CHAPTER X.

ON the evening on which Mr. Asterias had caught a glimpse of a female figure on the sea-shore, which he had translated into the visual sign of his interior cognition of a mermaid, Scythrop, retiring to his tower, found his study pre-occupied. A stranger, muffled in a cloak, was sitting at his table. Scythrop paused in surprise. The stranger rose at his entrance, and looked at him intently a few minutes, in silence. The eyes of the stranger alone were visible. All the rest of the figure was muffled and mantled in the folds of a black cloak, which was raised, by the right hand, to the level of the eyes. This scrutiny being completed, the stranger, dropping the cloak, said, "I see, by your physiognomy, that you may be trusted;" and revealed to the astonished Scythrop a female form and countenance of dazzling grace and beauty, with long flowing hair of raven blackness, and large black eyes of almost oppressive brilliancy, which strikingly contrasted with a complexion of snowy whiteness. Her dress was extremely elegant, but had an appearance of foreign fashion, as if both the lady and her mantuamaker were of "a far countree."

"I guess 't was frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she,
Beautiful exceedingly."

For, if it be terrible to one young lady to find another under a tree at midnight, it must, *à fortiori*, be much more terrible to a young gentleman to find a young lady in his study at that hour. If the logical consecutiveness of this conclusion be not manifest to my readers, I am sorry for their dulness, and must refer them, for more ample elucidation, to a treatise which Mr. Flosky intends to write, on

the Categories of Relation, which comprehend Substance and Accident, Cause and Effect, Action and Re-action.

Seythrop, therefore, either was or ought to have been frightened ; at all events, he was astonished ; and astonishment, though not in itself fear, is nevertheless a good stage towards it, and is, indeed, as it were, the half-way house between respect and terror, according to Mr. Burke's graduated scale of the sublime.*

"You are surprised," said the lady ; "yet why should you be surprised ? If you had met me in a drawing-room, and I had been introduced to you by an old woman, it would have been a matter of course : can the division of two or three walls, and the absence of an unimportant personage, make the same object essentially different in the perception of a philosopher ?"

"Certainly not," said Seythrop ; "but when any class of objects has habitually presented itself to our perceptions in invariable conjunction with particular relations, then, on the sudden appearance of one object of the class divested of those accompaniments, the essential difference of the relation is, by an involuntary process, transferred to the object itself, which thus offers itself to our perceptions with all the strangeness of novelty."

"You are a philosopher," said the lady, "and a lover of liberty. You are the author of a treatise, called '*Philosophical Gas* ; or, a Project for a General Illumination of the Human Mind.'

"I am," said Seythrop, delighted at this first blossom of his renown.

* There must be some mistake in this, for the whole honourable band of gentlemen pensioners has resolved unanimously, that Mr. Burke was a very sublime person, particularly after he had prostituted his own soul, and betrayed his country and mankind, for 1200*l.* a year : yet he does not appear to have been a very terrible personage, and certainly went off with a very small portion of human respect, though he contrived to excite, in a great degree, the astonishment of all honest men. Our immaculate laureate (who gives us to understand that, if he had not been purified by holy matrimony into a mystical type, he would have died a virgin,) is another sublime gentleman of the same genus : he very much astonished some persons when he sold his birthright for a pot of sack ; but not even his *Sosia* has a grain of respect for him, though, doubtless, he thinks his name very terrible to the enemy, when he flourishes his criticopoliticopolitical tomahawk, and sets up his Indian yell for the blood of his old friends : but, at best, he is a mere political scarecrow, a man of straw, ridiculous to all who know of what materials he is made ; and to none more so, than to those who have stuffed him, and set him up, as the Priapus of the garden of the golden apples of corruption.

"I am a stranger in this country," said the lady; "I have been but a few days in it, yet I find myself immediately under the necessity of seeking refuge from an atrocious persecution. I had no friend to whom I could apply; and, in the midst of my difficulties, accident threw your pamphlet in my way. I saw that I had, at least, one kindred mind in this nation, and determined to apply to you."

"And what would you have me do?" said Scythrop, more and more amazed, and not a little perplexed.

"I would have you," said the young lady, "assist me in finding some place of retreat, where I can remain concealed from the indefatigable search that is being made for me. I have been so nearly caught once or twice already, that I cannot confide any longer in my own ingenuity."

Doubtless, thought Scythrop, this is one of my golden candlesticks. "I have constructed," said he, "in this tower, an entrance to a small suite of unknown apartments in the main building, which I defy any creature living to detect. If you would like to remain there a day or two, till I can find you a more suitable concealment, you may rely on the honour of a transcendental eleutherarch."

"I rely on myself," said the lady. "I act as I please, go where I please, and let the world say what it will. I am rich enough to set it at defiance. It is the tyrant of the poor and the feeble, but the slave of those who are above the reach of its injury."

Scythrop ventured to inquire the name of his fair *protégée*. "What is a name?" said the lady: "any name will serve the purpose of distinction. Call me Stella. I see by your looks," she added, "that you think all this very strange. When you know me better, your surprise will cease. I submit not to be an accomplice in my sex's slavery. I am, like yourself, a lover of freedom, and I carry my theory into practice. *They alone are subject to blind authority who have no reliance on their own strength.*"

Stella took possession of the recondite apartments. Scythrop intended to find her another asylum; but from day to

day he postponed his intention, and by degrees forgot it. The young lady reminded him of it from day to day, till she also forgot it., Scythrop was anxious to learn her history; but she would add nothing to what she had already communicated, that she was shunning an atrocious persecution. Scythrop thought of Lord C. and the Alien Act, and said, "As you will not tell your name, I suppose it is in the green bag." Stella, not understanding what he meant, was silent; and Scythrop, translating silence into acquiescence, concluded that he was sheltering an *illuminée*, whom Lord S. suspected of an intention to take the Tower, and set fire to the Bank: exploits, at least, as likely to be accomplished by the hands and eyes of a young beauty, as by a drunken cobbler and doctor, armed with a pamphlet and an old stocking.

Stella, in her conversations with Scythrop displayed a highly cultivated and energetic mind, full of impassioned schemes of liberty, and impatience of masculine usurpation. She had a lively sense of all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and the vivid pictures which her imagination presented to her of the numberless scenes of injustice and misery which are being acted at every moment in every part of the inhabited world, gave an habitual seriousness to her physiognomy, that made it seem as if a smile had never once hovered on her lips. She was intimately conversant with the German language and literature; and Scythrop listened with delight to her repetitions of her favourite passages from Schiller and Göethe, and to her encomiums on the sublime Spartacus Weishaupt, the immortal founder of the sect of the Illuminati. Scythrop found that his soul had a greater capacity of love than the image of Marionetta had filled. The form of Stella took possession of every vacant corner of the cavity, and by degrees displaced that of Marionetta from many of the outworks of the citadel; though the latter still held possession of the *keep*. He judged, from his new friend calling herself Stella, that, if it were not her real name, she was an admirer of the principles of the German play from which she had taken it, and took an opportunity of leading the conversation to that subject; but to his great surprise,

the lady spoke very ardently of the singleness and exclusiveness of love, and declared that the reign of affection was one and indivisible; that it might be transferred, but could not be participated. "If I ever love," said she, "I shall do so without limit or restriction. I shall hold all difficulties light, all sacrifices cheap, all obstacles gossamer. But for love so total, I shall claim a return as absolute. I will have no rival: whether more or less favoured will be of little moment. I will be neither first nor second — I will be alone. The heart which I shall possess I will possess entirely, or entirely renounce."

Scythrop did not dare to mention the name of Marionetta; he trembled lest some unlucky accident should reveal it to Stella, though he scarcely knew what result to wish or anticipate, and lived in the double fever of a perpetual dilemma. He could not dissemble to himself that he was in love, at the same time, with two damsels of minds and habits as remote as the antipodes. The scale of predilection always inclined to the fair one who happened to be present; but the absent was never effectually outweighed, though the degrees of exaltation and depression varied according to accidental variations in the outward and visible signs of the inward and spiritual graces of his respective charmers. Passing and repassing several times a day from the company of the one to that of the other, he was like a shuttlecock between two battledores, changing its direction as rapidly as the oscillations of a pendulum, receiving many a hard knock on the cork of a sensitive heart, and flying from point to point on the feathers of a super-sublimated head. This was an awful state of things. He had now as much mystery about him as any romantic transcendentalist or transcendental romancer could desire. He had his esoteric and his exoteric love. He could not endure the thought of losing either of them, but he trembled when he imagined the possibility that some fatal discovery might deprive him of both. The old proverb concerning two strings to a bow gave him some gleams of comfort; but that concerning two stools occurred to him more frequently, and covered his forehead with a cold perspiration. With Stella, he could indulge freely in all his romantic and philosophical visions.

He could build castles in the air, and she would pile towers and turrets on the imaginary edifices. With Marionetta it was otherwise: she knew nothing of the world and society beyond the sphere of her own experience. Her life was all music and sunshine, and she wondered what any one could see to complain of in such a pleasant state of things. She loved Scythrop, she hardly knew why; indeed she was not always sure that she loved him at all: she felt her fondness increase or diminish in an inverse ratio to his. When she had manœuvred him into a fever of passionate love, she often felt and always assumed indifference: if she found that her coldness was contagious, and that Scythrop either was, or pretended to be, as indifferent as herself, she would become doubly kind, and raise him again to that elevation from which she had previously thrown him down. Thus, when his love was flowing, hers was ebbing: when his was ebbing, hers was flowing. Now and then there were moments of level tide, when reciprocal affection seemed to promise imperturbable harmony; but Scythrop could scarcely resign his spirit to the pleasing illusion, before the pinnacle of the lover's affections was caught in some eddy of the lady's caprice, and he was whirled away from the shore of his hopes, without rudder or compass, into an ocean of mists and storms. It resulted, from this system of conduct, that all that passed between Scythrop and Marionetta consisted in making and unmaking love. He had no opportunity to take measure of her understanding by conversations on general subjects, and on his favourite designs; and, being left in this respect to the exercise of indefinite conjecture, he took it for granted, as most lovers would do in similar circumstances, that she had great natural talents, which she wasted at present on trifles: but coquetry would end with marriage, and leave room for philosophy to exert its influence on her mind. Stella had no coquetry, no disguise: she was an enthusiast in subjects of general interest; and her conduct to Scythrop was always uniform, or rather showed a regular progression of partiality which seemed fast ripening into love.

CHAPTER XI.

SCYTHROP, attending one day the summons to dinner, found in the drawing-room his friend Mr. Cypress the poet, whom he had known at college, and who was a great favourite of Mr. Glowry. Mr. Cypress said, he was on the point of leaving England, but could not think of doing so without a farewell-look at Nightmare Abbey and his respected friends, the moody Mr. Glowry and the mysterious Mr. Scythrop, the sublime Mr. Flosky and the pathetic Mr. Listless; to all of whom, and the morbid hospitality of the melancholy dwelling in which they were then assembled, he assured them he should always look back with as much affection as his lacerated spirit could feel for any thing. The sympathetic condolence of their respective replies was cut short by Raven's announcement of "dinner on table."

The conversation that took place when the wine was in circulation, and the ladies were withdrawn, we shall report with our usual scrupulous fidelity.

MR. GLOWRY.

You are leaving England, Mr. Cypress. There is a delightful melancholy in saying farewell to an old acquaintance, when the chances are twenty to one against ever meeting again. A smiling bumper to a sad parting, and let us all be unhappy together.

MR. CYPRESS (*filling a bumper*).

This is the only social habit that the disappointed spirit never unlearns.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX (*filling*).

It is the only piece of academical learning that the finished educatec retains.

MR. FLOSKY (*filling*).

It is the only objective fact which the sceptic can realise.

SCYTHROP (*filling*).

It is the only styptic for a bleeding heart.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS (*filling*).

It is the only trouble that is very well worth taking.

MR. ASTERIAS (*filling*).

It is the only key of conversational truth.

MR. TOOBAD (*filling*).

It is the only antidote to the great wrath of the devil.

MR. HILARY (*filling*).

It is the only symbol of perfect life. The inscription "HIC NON BIBITUR" will suit nothing but a tombstone.

MR. GLOWRY.

You will see many fine old ruins, Mr. Cypress ; crumbling pillars, and mossy walls—many a one-legged Venus and headless Minerva—many a Neptune buried in sand—many a Jupiter turned topsy-turvy—many a perforated Bacchus doing duty as a water-pipe—many reminiscences of the ancient world, which I hope was better worth living in than the modern ; though, for myself, I care not a straw more for one than the other, and would not go twenty miles to see any thing that either could show.

MR. CYPRESS.

It is something to seek, Mr. Glowry. The mind is restless, and must persist in seeking, though to find is to be disappointed. Do you feel no aspirations towards the countries of Socrates and Cicero ? No wish to wander among the venerable remains of the greatness that has passed for ever ?

MR. GLOWRY.

Not a grain.

SCYTHROP.

It is, indeed, much the same as if a lover should dig up the buried form of his mistress, and gaze upon relics which are any thing but herself, to wander among a few mouldy ruins, that are only imperfect indexes to lost volumes of glory, and meet at every step the more melancholy ruins of

human nature—a degenerate race of stupid and shrivelled slaves, grovelling in the lowest depths of servility and superstition.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

It is the fashion to go abroad. I have thought of it myself, but am hardly equal to the exertion. To be sure, a little eccentricity and originality are allowable in some cases; and the most eccentric and original of all characters is an Englishman who stays at home.

SCYTHROP.

I should have no pleasure in visiting countries that are past all hope of regeneration. There is great hope of our own; and it seems to me that an Englishman, who, either by his station in society, or by his genius, or (as in your instance, Mr. Cypress,) by both, has the power of essentially serving his country in its arduous struggle with its domestic enemies, yet forsakes his country, which is still so rich in hope, to dwell in others which are only fertile in the ruins of memory, does what none of those ancients, whose fragmentary memorials you venerate, would have done in similar circumstances.

MR. CYPRESS.

Sir, I have quarrelled with my wife; and a man who has quarrelled with his wife is absolved from all duty to his country. I have written an ode to tell the people as much, and they may take it as they list.

SCYTHROP.

Do you suppose, if Brutus had quarrelled with his wife, he would have given it as a reason to Cassius for having nothing to do with his enterprise? Or would Cassius have been satisfied with such an excuse?

MR. FLOSKY.

Brutus was a senator; so is our dear friend: but the cases are different. Brutus had some hope of political good: Mr. Cypress has none. How should he, after what we have seen in France?

SCYTHROP.

A Frenchman is born in harness, ready saddled, bitted,

and bridled, for any tyrant to ride. He will fawn under his rider one moment, and throw him and kick him to death the next ; but another adventurer springs on his back, and by dint of whip and spur on he goes as before. We may, without much vanity, hope better of ourselves.

MR. CYPRESS.

I have no hope for myself or for others. Our life is a false nature ; it is not in the harmony of things ; it is an all-blasting upas, whose root is earth, and whose leaves are the skies which rain their poison-dews upon mankind. We wither from our youth ; we gasp with unslaked thirst for unattainable good ; lured from the first to the last by phantoms — love, fame, ambition, avarice — all idle, and all ill — one meteor of many names, that vanishes in the smoke of death.*

MR. FLOSKY.

A most delightful speech, Mr. Cypress. A most amiable and instructive philosophy. You have only to impress its truth on the minds of all living men, and life will then, indeed, be the desert and the solitude ; and I must do you, myself, and our mutual friends, the justice to observe, that let society only give fair play at one and the same time, as I flatter myself it is inclined to do, to your system of morals, and my system of metaphysics, and Scythrop's system of politics, and Mr. Listless's system of manners, and Mr. Toobad's system of religion, and the result will be as fine a mental chaos as even the immortal Kant himself could ever have hoped to see ; in the prospect of which I rejoice.

MR. HILARY.

"Certainly, ancient, it is not a thing to rejoice at : " I am one of those who cannot see the good that is to result from all this mystifying and blue-devilling of society. The contrast it presents to the cheerful and solid wisdom of antiquity is too forcible not to strike any one who has the least knowledge of classical literature. To represent

* Childe Harold, canto 4. cxxiv. cxxvi.

vice and misery as the necessary accompaniments of genius, is as mischievous as it is false, and the feeling is as unclassical as the language in which it is usually expressed.

MR. TOOBAD.

It is our calamity. The devil has come among us, and has begun by taking possession of all the cleverest fellows. Yet, forsooth, this is the enlightened age. Marry, how? Did our ancestors go peeping about with dark lanterns, and do we walk at our ease in broad sunshine? Where is the manifestation of our light? By what symptoms do you recognise it? What are its signs, its tokens, its symptoms, its symbols, its categories, its conditions? What is it, and why? How, where, when is it to be seen, felt, and understood? What do we see by it which our ancestors saw not, and which at the same time is worth seeing? We see a hundred men hanged, where they saw one. We see five hundred transported, where they saw one. We see five thousand in the workhouse, where they saw one. We see scores of Bible Societies, where they saw none. We see paper, where they saw gold. We see men in stays, where they saw men in armour. We see painted faces, where they saw healthy ones. We see children perishing in manufactories, where they saw them flourishing in the fields. We see prisons, where they saw castles. We see masters, where they saw representatives. In short, they saw true men, where we see false knaves. They saw Milton, and we see Mr. Sackbut.

MR. FLOSKY.

The false knave, sir, is my honest friend; therefore, I beseech you, let him be countenanced. God forbid but a knave should have some countenance at his friend's request.

MR. TOOBAD.

"Good men and true" was their common term, like the *καλὸς καγαθός* of the Athenians. It is so long since men have been either good or true, that it is to be questioned which is most obsolete, the fact or the phraseology.

MR. CYPRESS.

There is no worth nor beauty but in the mind's idea. Love sows the wind and reaps the whirlwind.* Confusion, thrice confounded, is the portion of him who rests even for an instant on that most brittle of reeds—the affection of a human being. The sum of our social destiny is to inflict or to endure.†

MR. HILARY.

Rather to bear and forbear, Mr. Cypress—a maxim which you perhaps despise. Ideal beauty is not the mind's creation: it is real beauty, refined and purified in the mind's alembic, from the alloy which always more or less accompanies it in our mixed and imperfect nature. But still the gold exists in a very ample degree. To expect too much is a disease in the expectant, for which human nature is not responsible; and, in the common name of humanity, I protest against these false and mischievous ravings. To rail against humanity for not being abstract perfection, and against human love for not realising all the splendid visions of the poets of chivalry, is to rail at the summer for not being all sunshine, and at the rose for not being always in bloom.

MR. CYPRESS.

Human love! Love is not an inhabitant of the earth. We worship him as the Athenians did their unknown God: but broken hearts are the martyrs of his faith, and the eye shall never see the form which phantasy paints, and which passion pursues through paths of delusive beauty, among flowers whose odours are agonies, and trees whose gums are poison.‡

MR. HILARY.

You talk like a Rosicrusian, who will love nothing but a sylph, who does not believe in the existence of a sylph, and who yet quarrels with the whole universe for not containing a sylph.

* *Childe Harold*, canto 4. cxxiii.

† *Ibid.* canto 3. lxxi.

‡ *Ibid.* canto 4. cxxi. cxxxvi.

MR. CYPRESS.

The mind is diseased of its own beauty, and fevers into false creation. The forms which the sculptor's soul has seized exist only in himself.*

MR. FLOSKY.

Permit me to discept. They are the mediums of common forms combined and arranged into a common standard. The ideal beauty of the Helen of Zeuxis was the combined medium of the real beauty of the virgins of Crotona.

MR. HILARY.

But to make ideal beauty the shadow in the water, and, like the dog in the fable, to throw away the substance in catching at the shadow, is scarcely the characteristic of wisdom, whatever it may be of genius. To reconcile man as he is to the world as it is, to preserve and improve all that is good, and destroy or alleviate all that is evil, in physical and moral nature—have been the hope and aim of the greatest teachers and ornaments of our species. I will say, too, that the highest wisdom and the highest genius have been invariably accompanied with cheerfulness. We have sufficient proofs on record that Shakspeare and Socrates were the most festive of companions. But now the little wisdom and genius we have seem to be entering into a conspiracy against cheerfulness.

MR. TOOBAD.

How can we be cheerful with the devil among us?

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

How can we be cheerful when our nerves are shattered?

MR. FLOSKY.

How can we be cheerful when we are surrounded by a *reading public*, that is growing too wise for its betters?

SCYTHROP.

How can we be cheerful when our great general designs are crossed every moment by our little particular passions?

MR. CYPRESS.

How can we be cheerful in the midst of disappointment and despair?

* Childe Harold, canto 4. cxxii.

MR. GLOWRY.

Let us all be unhappy together.

MR. HILARY.

Let us sing a catch.

MR. GLOWRY.

No : a nice tragical ballad. The Norfolk Tragedy to the tune of the Hundredth Psalm.

MR. HILARY.

I say a catch.

MR. GLOWRY.

I say no. A song from Mr. Cypress.

ALL.

A song from Mr. Cypress.

MR. CYPRESS *sung* —

There is a fever of the spirit,
 The brand of Cain's unresting doom,
 Which in the lone dark souls that bear it
 Glows like the lamp on Tullia's tomb :
 Unlike that lamp, its subtle fire
 Burns, blasts, consumes its cell, the heart,
 Till, one by one, hope, joy, desire,
 Like dreams of shadowy smoke depart.

When hope, love, life itself, are only
 Dust — spectral memories — dead and cold —
 The unfed fire burns bright and lonely,
 Like that undying lamp of old :
 And by that drear illumination,
 Till time its clay-built home has rent,
 Thought broods on feeling's desolation —
 The soul is its own monument.

MR. GLOWRY.

Admirable. Let us all be unhappy together.

MR. HILARY.

Now, I say again, a catch.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

I am for you.

MR. HILARY.

“ Seamen three.”

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

Agreed. I'll be Harry Gill, with the voice of three.
 Begin.

MR. HILARY AND THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

Seamen three ! What men be ye ?
 Gotham's three wise men we be.
 Whither in your bowl so free ?
 To rake the moon from out the sea.
 The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
 And our ballast is old wine ;
 And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift ?
 I am he they call Old Care.
 Here on board we will thee lift.
 No : I may not enter there.
 Wherefore so ? 'T is Jove's decree,
 In a bowl Care may not be ;
 In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll ?
 No : in charmed bowl we swim.
 What the charm that floats the bowl ?
 Water may not pass the brim.
 The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
 And our ballast is old wine ;
 And your ballast is old wine.

This catch was so well executed by the spirit and science of Mr. Hilary, and the deep tri-une voice of the reverend gentleman, that the whole party, in spite of themselves, caught the contagion, and joined in chorus at the conclusion, each raising a bumper to his lips :

The bowl goes trim : the moon doth shine :
 And our ballast is old wine.

Mr. Cypress, having his ballast on board, stepped, the same evening, into his bowl, or travelling chariot, and departed to rake seas and rivers, lakes and canals, for the moon of ideal beauty.

CHAPTER XII.

It was the custom of the Honourable Mr. Listless, on adjourning from the bottle to the ladies, to retire for a few moments to make a second toilette, that he might present himself in becoming taste. Fatout, attending as usual, appeared with a countenance of great dismay, and informed

his master that he had just ascertained that the abbey was haunted. Mrs. Hilary's *gentlewoman*, for whom Fatout had lately conceived a *tendresse*, had been, as she expressed it, "fritted out of her seventeen senses" the preceding night, as she was retiring to her bedchamber, by a ghastly figure which she had met stalking along one of the galleries, wrapped in a white shroud, with a bloody turban on its head. She had fainted away with fear; and, when she recovered, she found herself in the dark, and the figure was gone. "*Sacre — cochon — bleu !*" exclaimed Fatout, giving very deliberate emphasis to every portion of his terrible oath — "I would not meet de *revenant*, de ghost — *non* — not for all de *bowl-de-pouch* in de world."

"Fatout," said the Honourable Mr. Listless, "did I ever see a ghost?"

"*Jamais*, monsieur, never."

"Then I hope I never shall, for, in the present shattered state of my nerves, I am afraid it would be too much for me. There — loosen the lace of my stays a little, for really this plebeian practice of eating — Not too loose — consider my shape. That will do. And I desire that you bring me no more stories of ghosts; for, though I do not believe in such things, yet, when one is awake in the night, one is apt, if one thinks of them, to have fancies that give one a kind of a chill, particularly if one opens one's eyes suddenly on one's dressing gown, hanging in the moonlight, between the bed and the window."

The Honourable Mr. Listless, though he had prohibited Fatout from bringing him any more stories of ghosts, could not help thinking of that which Fatout had already brought; and, as it was uppermost in his mind, when he descended to the tea and coffee cups, and the rest of the company in the library, he almost involuntarily asked Mr. Flosky, whom he looked up to as a most oraculous personage, whether any story of any ghost that had ever appeared to any one, was entitled to any degree of belief?

MR. FLOSKY.

By far the greater number, to a very great degree.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Really, that is very alarming ! .

MR. FLOSKY.

Sunt geminæ somni portæ. There are two gates through which ghosts find their way to the upper air : fraud and self-delusion. In the latter case, a ghost is a *deceptio visûs*, an ocular spectrum, an idea with the force of a sensation. I have seen many ghosts myself. I dare say there are few in this company who have not seen a ghost.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

I am happy to say, I never have, for one.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

We have such high authority for ghosts, that it is rank scepticism to disbelieve them. Job saw a ghost, which came for the express purpose of asking a question, and did not wait for an answer.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

Because Job was too frightened to give one.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

Spectres appeared to the Egyptians during the darkness with which Moses covered Egypt. The witch of Endor raised the ghost of Samuel. Moses and Elias appeared on Mount Tabor. An evil spirit was sent into the army of Sennacherib, and exterminated it in a single night.

MR. TOOBAD,

Saying, The devil is come among you, having great wrath.

MR. FLOSKY.

Saint Macarius interrogated a skull, which was found in the desert, and made it relate, in presence of several witnesses, what was going forward in hell. Saint Martin of Tours, being jealous of a pretended martyr, who was the rival saint of his neighbourhood, called up his ghost, and made him confess that he was damned. Saint Germain, being on his travels, turned out of an inn a large party of ghosts, who had every night taken possession of the *table d'hôte*, and consumed a copious supper.

MR. HILARY.

Jolly ghosts, and no doubt all friars. A similar party took possession of the cellar of M. Swebach, the painter, in Paris, drank his wine, and threw the empty bottles at his head.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

An atrocious act.

MR. FLOSKY.

Pausanias relates, that the neighing of horses and the tumult of combatants were heard every night on the field of Marathon: that those who went purposely to hear these sounds suffered severely for their curiosity; but those who heard them by accident passed with impunity.

THE REVEREND MR. LARYNX.

I once saw a ghost myself, in my study, which is the last place where any one but a ghost would look for me. I had not been into it for three months, and was going to consult Tillotson, when, on opening the door, I saw a venerable figure in a flannel dressing gown, sitting in my armchair, and reading my Jeremy Taylor. It vanished in a moment, and so did I; and what it was or what it wanted I have never been able to ascertain.

MR. FLOSKY.

It was an idea with the force of a sensation. It is seldom that ghosts appeal to two senses at once; but, when I was in Devonshire, the following story was well attested to me. A young woman, whose lover was at sea, returning one evening over some solitary fields, saw her lover sitting on a stile over which she was to pass. Her first emotions were surprise and joy, but there was a paleness and seriousness in his face that made them give place to alarm. She advanced towards him, and he said to her, in a solemn voice, "The eye that hath seen me shall see me no more. Thine eye is upon me, but I am not." And with these words he vanished; and on that very day and hour, as it afterwards appeared, he had perished by shipwreck.

The whole party now drew round in a circle, and each related some ghostly anecdote, heedless of the flight of

time, till, in a pause of the conversation, they heard the hollow tongue of midnight sounding twelve.

MR. HILARY.

All these anecdotes admit of solution on psychological principles. It is more easy for a soldier, a philosopher, or even a saint, to be frightened at his own shadow, than for a dead man to come out of his grave. Medical writers cite a thousand singular examples of the force of imagination. Persons of feeble, nervous, melancholy temperament, exhausted by fever, by labour, or by spare diet, will readily conjure up, in the magic ring of their own phantasy, spectres, gorgons, chimæras, and all the objects of their hatred and their love. We are most of us like Don Quixote, to whom a windmill was a giant, and Dulcinea a magnificent princess: all more or less the dupes of our own imagination, though we do not all go so far as to see ghosts, or to fancy ourselves pipkins and teapots.

MR. FLOSKY.

I can safely say I have seen too many ghosts myself to believe in their external existence. I have seen all kinds of ghosts: black spirits and white, red spirits and grey. Some in the shapes of venerable old men, who have met me in my rambles at noon; some of beautiful young women, who have peeped through my curtains at midnight.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LISTLESS.

And have proved, I doubt not, "palpable to feeling as to sight."

MR. FLOSKY.

By no means, sir. You reflect upon my purity. Myself and my friends, particularly my friend Mr. Sackbut, are famous for our purity. No, sir, genuine untangible ghosts. I live in a world of ghosts. I see a ghost at this moment.

Mr. Flosky fixed his eyes on a door at the farther end of the library. The company looked in the same direction. The door silently opened, and a ghastly figure, shrouded in white drapery, with the semblance of a bloody turban on its head, entered and stalked slowly up the apartment.

Mr. Flosky, familiar as he was with ghosts, was not prepared for this apparition, and made the best of his way out at the opposite door. Mrs. Hilary and Marionetta followed, screaming. The Honourable Mr. Listless, by two turns of his body, rolled first off the sofa and then under it. The Reverend Mr. Larynx leaped up and fled with so much precipitation, that he overturned the table on the foot of Mr. Glowry. Mr. Glowry roared with pain in the ear of Mr. Toobad. Mr. Toobad's alarm so bewildered his senses, that, missing the door, he threw up one of the windows, jumped out in his panic, and plunged over head and ears in the moat. Mr. Asterias and his son, who were on the watch for their mermaid, were attracted by the splashing, threw a net over him, and dragged him to land.

Seythrop and Mr. Hilary meanwhile had hastened to his assistance, and, on arriving at the edge of the moat, followed by several servants with ropes and torches, found Mr. Asterias and Aquarins busy in endeavouring to extricate Mr. Toobad from the net, who was entangled in the meshes, and floundering with rage. Seythrop was lost in amazement; but Mr. Hilary saw, at one view, all the circumstances of the adventure, and burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; on recovering from which, he said to Mr. Asterias, "You have caught an odd fish, indeed." Mr. Toobad was highly exasperated at this unseasonable pleasantry; but Mr. Hilary softened his anger, by producing a knife, and cutting the Gordian knot of his reticular envelopement. "You see," said Mr. Toobad, "you see, gentlemen, in my unfortunate person proof upon proof of the present dominion of the devil in the affairs of this world; and I have no doubt but that the apparition of this night was Apollyon himself in disguise, sent for the express purpose of terrifying me into this complication of misadventures. The devil is come among you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. GLOWRY was much surprised, on occasionally visiting Scythrop's tower, to find the door always locked, and to be kept sometimes waiting many minutes for admission : during which he invariably heard a heavy rolling sound like that of a ponderous mangle, or of a waggon on a weighing-bridge, or of theatrical thunder.

He took little notice of this for some time : at length his curiosity was excited, and, one day, instead of knocking at the door, as usual, the instant he reached it, he applied his ear to the key-hole, and like Bottom, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, "spied a voice," which he guessed to be of the feminine gender, and knew to be not Scythrop's, whose deeper tones he distinguished at intervals. Having attempted in vain to catch a syllable of the discourse, he knocked violently at the door, and roared for immediate admission. The voices ceased, the accustomed rolling sound was heard, the door opened, and Scythrop was discovered alone. Mr. Glowry looked round to every corner of the apartment, and then said, "Where is the lady?"

"The lady, sir?" said Scythrop.

"Yes, sir, the lady."

"Sir, I do not understand you."

"You don't, sir?"

"No, indeed, sir. There is no lady here."

"But, sir, this is not the only apartment in the tower, and I make no doubt there is a lady up stairs."

"You are welcome to search, sir."

"Yes, and while I am searching, she will slip out from some lurking place, and make her escape."

"You may lock this door, sir, and take the key with you."

"But there is the terrace door : she has escaped by the terrace."

"The terrace, sir, has no other outlet, and the walls are too high for a lady to jump down."

"Well, sir, give me the key."

Mr. Glowry took the key, searched every nook of the tower, and returned.

"You are a fox, Scythrop; you are an exceedingly cunning fox, with that demure visage of yours. What was that lumbering sound I heard before you opened the door?"

"Sound, sir?"

"Yes, sir, sound."

"My dear sir, I am not aware of any sound, except my great table, which I moved on rising to let you in."

"The table!—let me see that. No, sir; not a tenth part heavy enough, not a tenth part."

"But, sir, you do not consider the laws of acoustics: a whisper becomes a peal of thunder in the focus of reverberation. Allow me to explain this: sounds striking on concave surfaces are reflected from them, and, after reflection, converge to points which are the foci of these surfaces. It follows, therefore, that the ear may be so placed in one, as that it shall hear a sound better than when situated nearer to the point of the first impulse: again, in the case of two concave surfaces placed opposite to each other——"

"Nonsense, sir. Don't tell me of foci. Pray, sir, will concave surfaces produce two voices when nobody speaks? I heard two voices, and one was feminine; feminine, sir: what say you to that?"

"Oh, sir, I perceive your mistake: I am writing a tragedy, and was acting over a scene to myself. To convince you, I will give you a specimen; but you must first understand the plot. It is a tragedy on the German model. The Great Mogul is in exile, and has taken lodgings at Kensington, with his only daughter, the Princess Rantorina, who takes in needlework, and keeps a day school. *The princess is discovered hemming a set of shirts for the parson of the parish: they are to be marked with a large R. Enter to her the Great Mogul. A pause, during which they look at each other expressively. The princess changes colour several times. The Mogul takes snuff in great agitation. Several grains are heard to fall on the stage. His heart is seen to beat through his upper benjamin.*—THE MOGUL

(*with a mournful look at his left shoe*). "My shoe-string is broken." — THE PRINCESS (*after an interval of melancholy reflection*.) "I know it." — THE MOGUL. "My second shoe-string! The first broke when I lost my empire: the second has broken to-day. When will my poor heart break?" — THE PRINCESS. "Shoe-strings, hearts, and empires! Mysterious sympathy!"

"Nonsense, sir," interrupted Mr. Glowry. "That is not at all like the voice I heard."

"But, sir," said Scythrop, "a key-hole may be so constructed as to act like an acoustic tube, and an acoustic tube, sir, will modify sound in a very remarkable manner. Consider the construction of the ear, and the nature and causes of sound. The external part of the ear is a cartilaginous funnel."

"It won't do, Scythrop. There is a girl concealed in this tower, and find her I will. There are such things as sliding panels and secret closets." — He sounded round the room with his cane, but detected no hollowness. — "I have heard, sir," he continued, "that during my absence, two years ago, you had a dumb carpenter closeted with you day after day. I did not dream that you were laying contrivances for carrying on secret intrigues. Young men will have their way: I had my way when I was a young man: but, sir, when your cousin Marionetta ——"

Scythrop now saw that the affair was growing serious. To have clapped his hand upon his father's mouth, to have entreated him to be silent, would, in the first place, not have made him so; and, in the second, would have shown a dread of being overheard by somebody. His only resource, therefore, was to try to drown Mr. Glowry's voice; and, having no other subject, he continued his description of the ear, raising his voice continually as Mr. Glowry raised his.

"When your cousin Marionetta," said Mr. Glowry, "whom you profess to love — whom you profess to love, sir ——"

"The internal canal of the ear," said Scythrop, "is partly bony and partly cartilaginous. This internal canal is ——"

"Is actually in the house, sir; and, when you are so shortly to be — as I expect ——"

"Closed at the further end by the *membrana tympani*—"

"Joined together in holy matrimony—"

"Under which is carried a branch of the fifth pair of nerves —"

"I say, sir, when you are so shortly to be married to your cousin Marionetta —"

"The *cavitas tympani* —"

A loud noise was heard behind the book-case, which, to the astonishment of Mr. Glowry, opened in the middle, and the massy compartments, with all their weight of books, receding from each other in the manner of a theatrical scene, with a heavy rolling sound (which Mr. Glowry immediately recognised to be the same which had excited his curiosity,) disclosed an interior apartment, in the entrance of which stood the beautiful Stella, who, stepping forward, exclaimed, "Married! Is he going to be married? The profligate!"

"Really, madam," said Mr. Glowry, "I do not know what he is going to do, or what I am going to do, or what any one is going to do; for all this is incomprehensible."

"I can explain it all," said Scythrop, "in a most satisfactory manner, if you will but have the goodness to leave us alone."

"Pray, sir, to which act of the tragedy of the Great Mogul does this incident belong?"

"I entreat you, my dear sir, leave us alone."

Stella threw herself into a chair, and burst into a tempest of tears. Scythrop sat down by her, and took her hand. She snatched her hand away, and turned her back upon him. He rose, sat down on the other side, and took her other hand. She snatched it away, and turned from him again. Scythrop continued entreating Mr. Glowry to leave them alone; but the old gentleman was obstinate, and would not go.

"I suppose, after all," said Mr. Glowry maliciously, "it is only a phenomenon in acoustics, and this young lady is a reflection of sound from concave surfaces."

Some one tapped at the door: Mr. Glowry opened it, and Mr. Hilary entered. He had been seeking Mr. Glowry, and had traced him to Scythrop's tower. He stood a few

moments in silent surprise, and then addressed himself to Mr. Glowry for an explanation.

"The explanation," said Mr. Glowry, "is very satisfactory. The Great Mogul has taken lodgings at Kensington, and the external part of the ear is a cartilaginous funnel."

"Mr. Glowry, that is no explanation."

"Mr. Hilary, it is all I know about the matter."

"Sir, this pleasantry is very unseasonable. I perceive that my niece is sported with in a most unjustifiable manner, and I shall see if she will be more successful in obtaining an intelligible answer." And he departed in search of Marionetta.

Scythrop was now in a hopeful predicament. Mr. Hilary made a hue and cry in the abbey, and summoned his wife and Marionetta to Scythrop's apartment. The ladies, not knowing what was the matter, hastened in great consternation. Mr. Toobad saw them sweeping along the corridor, and judging from their manner that the devil had manifested his wrath in some new shape, followed from pure curiosity.

Scythrop meanwhile vainly endeavoured to get rid of Mr. Glowry and to pacify Stella. The latter attempted to escape from the tower, declaring she would leave the abbey immediately, and he should never see her or hear of her more. Scythrop held her hand and detained her by force, till Mr. Hilary reappeared with Mrs. Hilary and Marionetta. Marionetta, seeing Scythrop grasping the hand of a strange beauty, fainted away in the arms of her aunt. Scythrop flew to her assistance; and Stella with redoubled anger sprang towards the door, but was intercepted in her intended flight by being caught in the arms of Mr. Toobad, who exclaimed—"Celinda!"

"Papa!" said the young lady disconsolately.

"The devil is come among you," said Mr. Toobad, "how came my daughter here?"

"Your daughter!" exclaimed Mr. Glowry.

"Your daughter!" exclaimed Scythrop, and Mr. and Mrs. Hilary.

"Yes," said Mr. Toobad, "my daughter Celinda."

Marionetta opened her eyes and fixed them on Celinda ; Celinda in return fixed hers on Marionetta. They were at remote points of the apartment. Scythrop was equidistant from both of them, central and motionless, like Mahomet's coffin.

" Mr. Glowry," said Mr. Toobad, " can you tell by what means my daughter came here ? "

" I know no more," said Mr. Glowry, " than the Great Mogul."

" Mr. Scythrop," said Mr. Toobad, " how came my daughter here ? "

" I did not know, sir, that the lady was your daughter."

" But how came she here ? "

" By spontaneous locomotion," said Scythrop, sullenly.

" Celinda," said Mr. Toobad, " what does all this mean ? "

" I really do not know, sir."

" This is most unaccountable. When I told you in London that I had chosen a husband for you, you thought proper to run away from him ; and now, to all appearance, you have run away to him."

" How, sir ! was that your choice ? "

" Precisely ; and if he is yours too we shall be both of a mind, for the first time in our lives."

" He is not my choice, sir. This lady has a prior claim : I renounce him."

" And I renounce him," said Marionetta.

Scythrop knew not what to do. He could not attempt to conciliate the one without irreparably offending the other ; and he was so fond of both, that the idea of depriving himself for ever of the society of either was intolerable to him : he therefore retreated into his strong hold, mystery ; maintained an impenetrable silence ; and contented himself with stealing occasionally a deprecating glance at each of the objects of his idolatry. Mr. Toobad and Mr. Hilary, in the mean time, were each insisting on an explanation from Mr. Glowry, who they thought had been playing a double game on this occasion. Mr. Glowry was vainly endeavouring to persuade them of his innocence in the whole transaction. Mrs. Hilary was endeavouring to me-

diate between her husband and brother. The Honourable Mr. Listless, the Reverend Mr. Larynx, Mr. Flosky, Mr. Asterias, and Aquarius, were attracted by the tumult to the scene of action, and were appealed to severally and conjointly by the respective disputants. Multitudinous questions, and answers *en masse*, composed a *charivari*, to which the genius of Rossini alone could have given a suitable accompaniment, and which was only terminated by Mrs. Hilary and Mr. Toobad retreating with the captive damsels. The whole party followed, with the exception of Scythrop, who threw himself into his arm-chair, crossed his left foot over his right knee, placed the hollow of his left hand on the interior ancle of his left leg, rested his right elbow on the elbow of the chair, placed the ball of his right thumb against his right temple, curved the forefinger along the upper part of his forehead, rested the point of the middle finger on the bridge of his nose, and the points of the two others on the lower part of the palm, fixed his eyes intently on the veins in the back of his left hand, and sat in this position like the immoveable Theseus, who, as is well known to many who have not been at college, and to some few who have, *sedet, æternumque sedebit*.* We hope the admirers of the *minutiae* in poetry and romance will appreciate this accurate description of a pensive attitude.

CHAPTER XIV.

SCYTHROP was still in this position when Raven entered to announce that dinner was on table.

"I cannot come," said Scythrop.

Raven sighed. "Something is the matter," said Raven: "but man is born to trouble."

"Leave me," said Scythrop: "go, and croak elsewhere."

* Sits, and will sit for ever.

"Thus it is," said Raven. Five-and-twenty years have I lived in Nightmare Abbey, and now all the reward of my affection is — Go, and croak elsewhere. I have danced you on my knee, and fed you with marrow."

"Good Raven," said Scythrop, "I entreat you to leave me."

"Shall I bring your dinner here?" said Raven. "A boiled fowl and a glass of Madcira are prescribed by the faculty in cases of low spirits. But you had better join the party: it is very much reduced already."

"Reduced! how?"

"The Honourable Mr. Listless is gone. He declared that, what with family quarrels in the morning, and ghosts at night, he could get neither sleep nor peace; and that the agitation was too much for his nerves: though Mr. Glowry assured him that the ghost was only poor Crow walking in his sleep, and that the shroud and bloody turban were a sheet and a red nightcap."

"Well, sir?"

"The Reverend Mr. Larynx has been called off on duty, to marry or bury (I don't know which) some unfortunate person or persons, at Claydyke: but man is born to trouble!"

"Is that all?"

"No. Mr. Toobad is gone too, and a strange lady with him."

"Gone!"

"Gone. And Mr. and Mrs. Hilary, and Miss O'Carroll: they are all gone. There is nobody left but Mr. Asterias and his son, and they are going to-night."

"Then I have lost them both."

"Won't you come to dinner?"

"No."

"Shall I bring your dinner here?"

"Yes."

"What will you have?"

"A pint of port and a pistol."*

"A pistol!"

* See *The Sorrows of Werter*, Letter 93.

"And a pint of port. I will make my exit like Werter. Go. Stay. Did Miss O'Carroll say any thing?"

"No."

"Did Miss Toobad say any thing?"

"The strange lady? No."

"Did either of them cry?"

"No."

"What did they do?"

"Nothing."

"What did Mr. Toobad say?"

"He said, fifty times over, the devil was come among us."

"And they are gone?"

"Yes; and the dinner is getting cold. There is a time for every thing under the sun. You may as well dine first, and be miserable afterwards."

"True, Raven. There is something in that. I will take your advice: therefore, bring me——"

"The port and the pistol?"

"No; the boiled fowl and Madeira."

Seythrop had dined, and was sipping his Madeira alone, immersed in melancholy musing, when Mr. Glowry entered, followed by Raven, who, having placed an additional glass and set a chair for Mr. Glowry, withdrew. Mr. Glowry sat down opposite Seythrop. After a pause, during which each filled and drank in silence, Mr. Glowry said, "So, sir, you have played your cards well. I proposed Miss Toobad to you: you refused her. Mr. Toobad proposed you to her: she refused you. You fell in love with Marionetta, and were going to poison yourself, because, from pure fatherly regard to your temporal interests, I withheld my consent. When, at length, I offered you my consent, you told me I was too precipitate. And, after all, I find you and Miss Toobad living together in the same tower, and behaving in every respect like two plighted lovers. Now, sir, if there be any rational solution of all this absurdity, I shall be very much obliged to you for a small glimmering of information."

"The solution, sir, is of little moment; but I will leave it in writing for your satisfaction. The crisis of my fate is come: the world is a stage, and my direction is *exit*."

"Do not talk so, sir ;—do not talk so, Scythrop. What would you have ?"

"I would have my love."

"And pray, sir, who is your love ?"

"Celinda—Marionetta—either—both."

"Both ! That may do very well in a German tragedy ; and the Great Mogul might have found it very feasible in his lodgings at Kensington ; but it will not do in Lincolnshire. Will you have Miss Toobad ?"

"Yes."

"And renounce Marionetta ?"

"No."

"But you must renounce one."

"I cannot."

"And you cannot have both. What is to be done ?"

"I must shoot myself."

"Don't talk so, Scythrop. Be rational, my dear Scythrop. Consider, and make a cool, calm choice, and I will exert myself in your behalf."

"Why should I choose, sir ? Both have renounced *me* : I have no hope of either."

"Tell me which you will have, and I will plead your cause irresistibly."

"Well, sir,—I will have—no, sir, I cannot renounce either. I cannot choose either. I am doomed to be the victim of eternal disappointments ; and I have no resource but a pistol."

"Scythrop—Scythrop ;—if one of them should come to you—what then ?"

"That, sir, might alter the case : but that cannot be."

"It can be, Scythrop ; it will be : I promise you it will be. Have but a little patience— but a week's patience and it shall be."

"A week, sir, is an age : but, to oblige you, as a last act of filial duty, I will live another week. It is now Thursday evening, twenty-five minutes past seven. At this hour and minute, on Thursday next, love and fate shall smile on me, or I will drink my last pint of port in this world."

Mr. Glowry ordered his travelling chariot, and departed from the abbey.

CHAPTER XV.

THE day after Mr. Glowry's departure was one of incessant rain, and Scythrop repented of the promise he had given. The next day was one of bright sunshine: he sat on the terrace, read a tragedy of Sophocles, and was not sorry, when Raven announced dinner, to find himself alive. On the third evening, the wind blew, and the rain beat, and the owl flapped against his windows; and he put a new flint in his pistol. On the fourth day, the sun shone again; and he locked the pistol up in a drawer, where he left it undisturbed, till the morning of the eventful Thursday, when he ascended the turret with a telescope, and spied anxiously along the road that crossed the fens from Claydyke: but nothing appeared on it. He watched in this manner from ten A.M. till Raven summoned him to dinner at five; when he stationed Crow at the telescope, and descended to his own funeral-feast. He left open the communications between the tower and turret, and called aloud at intervals to Crow,—“Crow, Crow, is any thing coming?” Crow answered, “The wind blows, and the windmills turn, but I see nothing coming;” and, at every answer, Scythrop found the necessity of raising his spirits with a bumper. After dinner, he gave Raven his watch to set by the abbey clock. Raven brought it, Scythrop placed it on the table, and Raven departed. Scythrop called again to Crow; and Crow, who had fallen asleep, answered mechanically, “I see nothing coming.” Scythrop laid his pistol between his watch and his bottle. The hour-hand passed the VII.—the minute-hand moved on;—it was within three minutes of the appointed time. Scythrop called again to Crow. Crow answered as before. Scythrop rang the bell: Raven appeared.

"Raven," said Scythrop, "the clock is too fast."

"No, indeed," said Raven, who knew nothing of Scythrop's intentions; "if any thing, it is too slow."

"Villain!" said Scythrop, pointing the pistol at him; "it is too fast."

"Yes — yes — too fast, I meant," said Raven, in manifest fear.

"How much too fast?" said Scythrop.

"As much as you please," said Raven.

"How much, I say?" said Scythrop, pointing the pistol again.

"An hour, a full hour, sir," said the terrified butler.

"Put back my watch," said Scythrop.

Raven, with trembling hand, was putting back the watch, when the rattle of wheels was heard in the court; and Scythrop, springing down the stairs by three steps together, was at the door in sufficient time to have handed either of the young ladies from the carriage, if she had happened to be in it; but Mr. Glowry was alone.

"I rejoice to see you," said Mr. Glowry; "I was fearful of being too late, for I waited till the last moment in the hope of accomplishing my promise; but all my endeavours have been vain, as these letters will show."

Scythrop impatiently broke the seals. The contents were these: —

"Almost a stranger in England, I fled from parental tyranny, and the dread of an arbitrary marriage, to the protection of a stranger and a philosopher, whom I expected to find something better than, or at least something different from, the rest of his worthless species. Could I, after what has occurred, have expected nothing more from you than the common-place impertinence of sending your father to treat with me, and with mine, for me? I should be a little moved in your favour, if I could believe you capable of carrying into effect the resolutions which your father says you have taken, in the event of my proving inflexible; though I doubt not you will execute them, as far as relates to the pint of wine, twice over, at least. I

wish you much happiness with Miss O'Carroll. I shall always cherish a grateful recollection of Nightmare Abbey, for having been the means of introducing me to a true transcendentalist; and, though he is a little older than myself, which is all one in Germany, I shall very soon have the pleasure of subscribing myself

“CELINDA FLOSKY.”

“I hope, my dear cousin, that you will not be angry with me, but that you will always think of me as a sincere friend, who will always feel interested in your welfare; I am sure you love Miss Toobad much better than me, and I wish you much happiness with her. Mr. Listless assures me that people do not kill themselves for love now-a-days, though it is still the fashion to talk about it. I shall, in a very short time, change my name and situation, and shall always be happy to see you in Berkeley Square, when, to the unalterable designation of your affectionate cousin, I shall subjoin the signature of

“MARIONETTA LISTLESS.”

Scythrop tore both the letters to atoms, and railed in good set terms against the fickleness of women.

“Calm yourself, my dear Scythrop,” said Mr. Glowry; “there are yet maidens in England.”

“Very true, sir,” said Scythrop.

“And the next time,” said Mr. Glowry, “have but one string to your bow.”

“Very good advice, sir,” said Scythrop.

“And, besides,” said Mr. Glowry, “the fatal time is past, for it is now almost eight.”

“Then that villain, Raven,” said Scythrop, “deceived me when he said that the clock was too fast; but, as you observe very justly, the time has gone by, and I have just reflected that these repeated crosses in love qualify me to take a very advanced degree in misanthropy; and there is, therefore, good hope that I may make a figure in the world. But I shall ring for the rascal Raven, and admonish him.”

Raven appeared. Scythrop looked at him very fiercely two or three minutes ; and Raven, still remembering the pistol, stood quaking in mute apprehension, till Scythrop, pointing significantly towards the dining-room, said, "*Bring some Madeira.*"

MAID MARIAN.

[First published in 1822.]

Yet thanks I must you con, that you work not
In holier shapes . for there is boundless theft
In limited professions, --- *Timon of Athens.*

MAID MARIAN.

CHAPTER I.

Now come ye for peace here, or come ye for war? — SCOTT.

“THE abbot, in his alb arrayed,” stood at the altar in the abbey-chapel of Rubygill, with all his plump, sleek, rosy friars, in goodly lines disposed, to solemnise the nuptials of the beautiful Matilda Fitzwater, daughter of the Baron of Arlingford, with the noble Robert Fitz-Ooth, Earl of Locksley and Huntingdon. The abbey of Rubygill stood in a picturesque valley, at a little distance from the western boundary of Sherwood Forest, in a spot which seemed adapted by nature to be the retreat of monastic mortification, being on the banks of a fine trout-stream, and in the midst of woodland coverts, abounding with excellent game. The bride, with her father and attendant maidens, entered the chapel; but the earl had not arrived. The baron was amazed, and the bridesmaids were disconcerted. Matilda feared that some evil had befallen her lover, but felt no diminution of her confidence in his honour and love. Through the open gates of the chapel she looked down the narrow road that wound along the side of the hill; and her ear was the first that heard the distant trampling of horses, and her eye was the first that caught the glitter of snowy plumes, and the light of polished spears. “It is strange,” thought the baron, “that the earl should come in this martial array to his wedding;” but he had not long to meditate on the phenomenon, for the foaming steeds swept

up to the gate like a whirlwind, and the earl, breathless with speed, and followed by a few of his yeomen, advanced to his smiling bride. It was then no time to ask questions, for the organ was in full peal, and the choristers were in full voice.

The abbot began to intone the ceremony in a style of modulation impressively exalted, his voice issuing most canonically from the roof of his mouth, through the medium of a very musical nose newly tuned for the occasion. But he had not proceeded far enough to exhibit all the variety and compass of this melodious instrument, when a noise was heard at the gate, and a party of armed men entered the chapel. The song of the choristers died away in a shake of demisemiquavers, contrary to all the rules of psalmody. The organ-blower, who was working his musical air-pump with one hand, and with two fingers and a thumb of the other insinuating a peeping-place through the curtain of the organ-gallery, was struck motionless by the double operation of curiosity and fear; while the organist, intent only on his performance, and spreading all his fingers to strike a swell of magnificent chords, felt his harmonic spirit ready to desert his body on being answered by the ghastly rattle of empty keys, and in the consequent *agitato furioso* of the internal movements of his feelings, was preparing to restore harmony by the *segue subito* of an *appoggiatura con foco* with the corner of a book of anthems on the head of his neglectful assistant, when his hand and his attention together were arrested by the scene below. The voice of the abbot subsided into silence through a descending scale of long-drawn melody, like the sound of the ebbing sea to the explorers of a cave. In a few moments all was silence, interrupted only by the iron tread of the armed intruders, as it rang on the marble floor and echoed from the vaulted aisles.

The leader strode up to the altar; and placing himself opposite to the abbot, and between the earl and Matilda, in such a manner that the four together seemed to stand on the four points of a diamond, exclaimed, "In the name of King Henry, I forbid the ceremony, and attach Robert Earl of Huntingdon as a traitor!" and at the same time he

held his drawn sword between the lovers, as if to emblem that royal authority which laid its temporal ban upon their contract. The earl drew his own sword instantly, and struck down the interposing weapon; then clasped his left arm round Matilda, who sprang into his embrace, and held his sword before her with his right hand. His yomen ranged themselves at his side, and stood with their swords drawn, still and prepared, like men determined to die in his defence. The soldiers, confident in superiority of numbers, paused. The abbot took advantage of the pause to introduce a word of exhortation. "My children," said he, "if you are going to cut each other's throats, I entreat you, in the name of peace and charity, to do it out of the chapel."

"Sweet Matilda," said the earl, "did you give your love to the Earl of Huntingdon, whose lands touch the Ouse and the Trent, or to Robert Fitz-Ooth, the son of his mother?"

"Neither to the earl nor his earldom," answered Matilda firmly, "but to Robert Fitz-Ooth and his love."

"That I well knew," said the earl; "and though the ceremony be incomplete, we are not the less married in the eye of my only saint, our Lady, who will yet bring us together. Lord Fitzwater, to your care, for the present, I commit your daughter. — Nay, sweet Matilda, part we must for a while; but we will soon meet under brighter skies, and be this the seal of our faith."

He kissed Matilda's lips, and consigned her to the baron, who glowered about him with an expression of countenance that showed he was mortally wroth with somebody; but whatever he thought or felt he kept to himself. The earl, with a sign to his followers, made a sudden charge on the soldiers, with the intention of cutting his way through. The soldiers were prepared for such an occurrence, and a desperate skirmish succeeded. Some of the women screamed, but none of them fainted; for fainting was not so much the fashion in those days, when the ladies breakfasted on brawn and ale at sunrise, as in our more refined age of green tea

and muffins at noon. Matilda seemed disposed to fly again to her lover, but the baron forced her from the chapel. The earl's bowmen at the door sent in among the assailants a volley of arrows, one of which whizzed past the ear of the abbot, who, in mortal fear of being suddenly translated from a ghostly friar into a friarly ghost, began to roll out of the chapel as fast as his bulk and his holy robes would permit, roaring "Sacrilege!" with all his monks at his heels, who were, like himself, more intent to go at once than to stand upon the order of their going. The abbot, thus pressed from behind, and stumbling over his own drapery before, fell suddenly prostrate in the door-way that connected the chapel with the abbey, and was instantaneously buried under a pyramid of ghostly carcasses, that fell over him and each other, and lay a rolling chaos of animated rotundities, sprawling and bawling in unseemly disarray, and sending forth the names of all the saints in and out of heaven, amidst the clashing of swords, the ringing of bucklers, the clattering of helmets, the twanging of bow-strings, the whizzing of arrows, the screams of women, the shouts of the warriors, and the vociferations of the peasantry, who had been assembled to the intended nuptials, and who, seeing a fair set-to, contrived to pick a quarrel among themselves on the occasion, and proceeded, with staff and cudgel, to crack each other's skulls for the good of the king and the earl. One tall friar alone was untouched by the panic of his brethren, and stood steadfastly watching the combat with his arms a-kembo, the colossal emblem of an unarmed neutrality.

At length, through the midst of the internal confusion, the earl, by the help of his good sword, the staunch valour of his men, and the blessing of the Virgin, fought his way to the chapel-gate—his bowmen closed him in—he vaulted into his saddle, clapped spurs to his horse, rallied his men on the first eminence, and exchanged his sword for a bow and arrow, with which he did old execution among the pursuers, who at last thought it most expedient to desist from offensive warfare, and to retreat into the abbey, where, in the king's name, they broached a pipe of the best wine, and attached all the venison in the larder, having first

carefully unpacked the tuft of friars, and set the fallen abbot on his legs.

The friars, it may be well supposed, and such of the king's men as escaped unhurt from the affray, found their spirits a cup too low, and kept the flask moving from noon till night. The peaceful brethren, unused to the tumult of war, had undergone, from fear and discomposure, an exhaustion of animal spirits that required extraordinary refec-tion. During the repast, they interrogated Sir Ralph Montfaucon, the leader of the soldiers, respecting the nature of the earl's offence.

"A complication of offences," replied sir Ralph, "superinduced on the original basis of forest-treason. He began with hunting the king's deer, in despite of all remonstrance; followed it up by contempt of the king's mandates, and by armed resistance to his power, in defiance of all authority; and combined with it the resolute withholding of payment of certain moneys to the abbot of Doncaster, in denial of all law; and has thus made himself the declared enemy of church and state, and all for being too fond of venison." And the knight helped himself to half a pasty.

"A heinous offender," said a little round oily friar, appropriating the portion of pasty which Sir Ralph had left.

"The earl is a worthy peer," said the tall friar whom we have already mentioned in the chapel scene, "and the best marksman in England."

"Why this is flat treason, brother Michael," said the little round friar, "to call an attainted traitor a worthy peer."

"I pledge you," said brother Michael. The little friar smiled and filled his cup. "He will draw the long bow," pursued brother Michael, "with any bold yeoman among them all."

"Don't talk of the long bow," said the abbot, who had the sound of the arrow still whizzing in his ear: "what have we pillars of the faith to do with the long bow?"

"Be that as it may," said Sir Ralph, "he is an outlaw from this moment."

"So much the worse for the law then," said brother

Michael. "The law will have a heavier miss of him than he will have of the law. He will strike as much venison as ever, and more of other game. I know what I say; but *basta*; Let us drink."

"What other game?" said the little friar. "I hope he won't poach among our partridges."

"Poach! not he," said brother Michael: "if he wants your partridges, he will strike them under your nose (here's to you), and drag your trout-stream for you on a Thursday evening."

"Monstrous! and starve us on fast-day," said the little friar.

"But that is not the game I mean," said brother Michael.

"Surely, son Michael," said the abbot, "you do not mean to insinuate that the noble earl will turn free-booter?"

"A man must live," said brother Michael, "earl or no. If the law takes his rents and beeves without his consent, he must take beeves and rents where he can get them without the consent of the law. This is the *lex talionis*."

"Truly," said Sir Ralph, "I am sorry for the damsel; she seems fond of this wild runagate."

"A mad girl, a mad girl," said the little friar.

"How a mad girl?" said brother Michael. "Has she not beauty, grace, wit, sense, discretion, dexterity, learning, and valour?"

"Learning!" exclaimed the little friar; "what has a woman to do with learning? And valour! who ever heard a woman commended for valour? Meekness and mildness, and softness, and gentleness, and tenderness, and humility, and obedience to her husband; and faith in her confessor, and domesticity, or, as learned doctors call it, the faculty of stay-at-home-iveness, and embroidery, and music, and pickling, and preserving, and the whole complex and multiplex detail of the noble science of dinner, as well in preparation for the table, as in arrangement over it, and in distribution around it to knights, and squires, and ghostly friars, — these are female-virtues: but valour — why who ever heard —?"

"She is the all in all," said brother Michael, "gentle as a ring-dove, yet high-soaring as a falcon: humble below her deserving, yet deserving beyond the estimate of panegyric: an exact economist in all superfluity, yet a most bountiful dispenser in all liberality: the chief regulator of her household, the fairest pillar of her hall, and the sweetest blossom of her bower: having, in all opposite proposings, sense to understand, judgment to weigh, discretion to choose, firmness to undertake, diligence to conduct, perseverance to accomplish, and resolution to maintain. For obedience to her husband, that is not to be tried till she has one: for faith in her confessor, she has as much as the law prescribes: for embroidery an Arachne: for music a Siren: and for pickling and preserving, did not one of her jars of sugared apricots give you your last surfeit at Arlingford Castle?"

"Call you that preserving?" said the little friar; "I call it destroying. Call you it pickling? Truly it pickled me. My life was saved by miracle."

"By canary," said brother Michael. "Canary is the only life preserver, the true *aurum potabile*, the universal panacea for all diseases, thirst, and short life. Your life was saved by canary."

"Indeed, reverend father," said Sir Ralph, "if the young lady be half what you describe, she must be a paragon: but your commending her for valour does somewhat amaze me."

"She can fence," said the little friar, "and draw the long bow, and play at single-stick and quarter-staff."

"Yet mark you," said brother Michael, "not like a virago or a hoyden, or one that would crack a serving-man's head for spilling gravy on her ruff, but with such womanly grace and temperate self-command as if those manly exercises belonged to her only, and were become for her sake feminine."

"You incite me," said Sir Ralph, "to view her more nearly. That madcap earl found me other employment than to remark her in the chapel."

"The earl is a worthy peer," said brother Michael; "he is worth any fourteen earls on this side Trent, and any

seven on the other." (The reader will please to remember that Rubygill Abbey was *north* of Trent.)

"His mettle will be tried," said Sir Ralph. There is many a courtier will swear to King Henry to bring him in dead or alive."

"They must look to the brambles then," said brother Michael.

The hramble, the bramble, the bonny forest bramble,
Doth make a jest
Of silken vest,
That will through greenwood seramble :
The bramble, the bramble, the bonny forest bramble."

"Plague on your lungs, son Michael," said the abbot ;
"this is your old coil : always roaring in your cups."

"I know what I say," said brother Michael ; "there is often more sense in an old song than in a new homily.

The courtly pad doth amble,
When his gay lord would ramble :
But both may catch
An awkward scratch,
If they ride among the bramble :
The bramble, the bramble, the bonny forest bramble."

"Tall friar," said Sir Ralph, "either you shoot the shafts of your merriment at random, or you know more of the earl's designs than beseems your frock."

"Let my frock," said brother Michael, "answer for its own sins. It is worn past covering mine. It is too weak for a shield, too transparent for a screen, too thin for a shelter, too light for gravity, and too threadbare for a jest. The wearer would be naught indeed who should misbeseem such a wedding garment.

But wherefore does the sheep wear wool ?
That he in season sheared may be,
And the shepherd be warm though his flock be cool :
So I'll have a new cloak about me."

CHAPTER II.

Vray moyne si oncques en feut depuis que le monde moynant moyna de moynerie. — RABELAIS.

THE Earl of Huntingdon, living in the vicinity of a royal forest, and passionately attached to the chase from his infancy, had long made as free with the king's deer as Lord Percy proposed to do with those of Lord Douglas in the memorable hunting of Cheviot. It is sufficiently well known how severe were the forest-laws in those days, and with what jealousy the kings of England maintained this branch of their prerogative; but menaces and remonstrances were thrown away on the earl, who declared that he would not thank Saint Peter for admission into Paradise, if he were obliged to leave his bow and hounds at the ga c. King Henry (the Second) swore by Saint Botolph to make him rue his sport, and, having caused him to be duly and formally accused, summoned him to London to answer the charge. The earl, deeming himself safer among his own vassals than among king Henry's courtiers, took no notice of the mandate. King Henry sent a force to bring him, *vi et armis*, to court. The earl made a resolute resistance, and put the king's force to flight under a shower of arrows: an act which the courtiers declared to be treason. At the same time, the abbot of Doncaster sued up the payment of certain moneys, which the earl, whose revenue ran a losing race with his hospitality, had borrowed at sundry times of the said abbot: for the abbots and the bishops were the chief usurers of those days, and, as the end sanctifies the means, were not in the least scrupulous of employing what would have been extortion in the profane, to accomplish the pious purpose of bringing a blessing on the land by rescuing it from the frail hold of carnal and temporal into the firmer grasp of ghostly and spiritual possessors. But the earl, confident in the number and attachment of his retainers, stoutly refused either to repay the money, which he could not, or to yield the forfeiture, which

he would not: a refusal which in those days was an act of outlawry in a gentleman, as it is now of bankruptcy in a base mechanic; the gentleman having in our wiser times a more liberal privilege of gentility, which enables him to keep his land and laugh at his creditor. Thus the mutual resentments and interests of the king and the abbot concurred to subject the earl to the penalties of outlawry, by which the abbot would gain his due upon the lands of Locksley, and the rest would be confiscate to the king. Still the king did not think it advisable to assail the earl in his own strong hold, but caused a diligent watch to be kept over his motions, till at length his rumoured marriage with the heiress of Arlingford seemed to point out an easy method of laying violent hands on the offender. Sir Ralph Montfaucon, a young man of good lineage and of an aspiring temper, who readily seized the first opportunity that offered of recommending himself to King Henry's favour by manifesting his zeal in his service, undertook the charge: and how he succeeded we have seen.

Sir Ralph's curiosity was strongly excited by the friar's description of the young lady of Arlingford; and he prepared in the morning to visit the castle, under the very plausible pretext of giving the baron an explanation of his intervention at the nuptials. Brother Michael and the little fat friar proposed to be his guides. The proposal was courteously accepted, and they set out together, leaving Sir Ralph's followers at the abbey. The knight was mounted on a spirited charger; brother Michael on a large heavy-trotting horse; and the little fat friar on a plump soft-paced galloway, so correspondent with himself in size, rotundity, and sleekness, that if they had been amalgamated into a centaur, there would have been nothing to alter in their proportions.

"Do you know," said the little friar, as they wound along the banks of the stream, "the reason why lake-trout is better than river-trout, and shyer withal?"

"I was not aware of the fact," said Sir Ralph.

"A most heterodox remark," said brother Michael: "know you not, that in all nice matters you should take

the implication for absolute, and, without looking into the *fact whether*, seek only the *reason why*? But the fact is so, on the word of a friar; which what layman will venture to gainsay who prefers a down bed to a gridiron?"

"The fact being so," said the knight, "I am still at a loss for the reason; nor would I undertake to opine in a matter of that magnitude: since, in all that appertains to the good things either of this world or the next, my reverend spiritual guides are kind enough to take the trouble of thinking off my hands."

"Spoken," said brother Michael, "with a sound Catholic conscience. My little brother here is most profound in the matter of trout. He has marked, learned, and inwardly digested the subject, twice a week at least for five-and-thirty years. I yield to him in this. My strong points are venison and canary."

"The good qualities of a trout," said the little friar, "are firmness and redness: the redness, indeed, being the visible sign of all other virtues."

"Whence," said brother Michael, "we choose our abbot by his nose:

The rose on the nose doth all virtues disclose:
For the outward grace shows
That the inward overflows.
When it glows in the rose of a red, red nose."

"Now," said the little friar, "as is the firmness so is the redness, and as is the redness so is the shyness."

"Marry why?" said brother Michael. "The solution is not physical-natural, but physical-historical, or natural-superinductive. And thereby hangs a tale, which may be either said or sung:

The damsel stood to watch the fight
By the banks of King-lea Mere,
And they brought to her feet her own true knight
Sore-wounded on a hier.

She knelt by him his wounds to bind,
She washed them with many a tear,
And shouts rose fast upon the wind,
Which told that the foe was near.

"Oh! let not," he said, "while yet I live,
The cruel foe me take:
But with thy sweet lips a last kiss give,
And cast me in the lake."

Around his neck she wound her arms,
 And she kissed his lips so pale :
 And evermore the war's alarms
 Came louder up the vale.

She drew him to the lake's steep side,
 Where the red heath fringed the shore ;
 She plunged with him beneath the tide,
 And they were seen no more.

Their true blood mingled in Kingslea Mere,
 That to mingle on earth was fain :
 And the trout that swam in that crystal clear
 Is tinged with the crimson stain.

" Thus you see how good comes of evil, and how a holy friar may fare better on fast-day for the violent death of two lovers two hundred years ago. The inference is most consecutive, that wherever you catch a red-fleshed trout, love lies bleeding under the water : an occult quality, which can only act in the stationary waters of a lake, being neutralised by the rapid transition of those of a stream."

" And why is the trout slyer for that?" asked Sir Ralph.

" Do you not see?" said brother Michael. " The virtues of both lovers diffuse themselves through the lake. The infusion of masculine valour makes the fish active and sanguineous : the infusion of maiden modesty makes him coy and hard to win : and you shall find through life, the fish which is most easily hooked is not the best worth dishing. But yonder are the towers of Arlingford."

The little friar stopped. He seemed suddenly struck with an awful thought, which caused a momentary pallescence in his rosy complexion ; and after a brief hesitation, he turned his galloway, and told his companions he should give them good day.

" Why, what is in the wind now, brother Peter?" said Friar Michael.

" The lady Matilda," said the little friar, " can draw the long-bow. She must bear no goodwill to Sir Ralph ; and if she should espy him from her tower, she may testify her recognition with a cloth-yard shaft. She is not so infallible a markswoman, but that she might shoot at a crow and kill a pigeon. She might peradventure miss the knight, and hit me, who never did her any harm."

"Tut, tut, man," said brother Michael, "there is no such fear."

"Mass," said the little friar, "but there is such a fear, and verry strong too. You who have it not may keep your way, and I who have it shall take mine. I am not just now in the vein for being picked off at a long shot." And saying these words, he spurred up his four-footed better half, and galloped off as nimbly as if he had had an arrow singing behind him.

"Is this lady Matilda, then, so verry terrible a damsel?" said Sir Ralph to brother Michael.

"By no means," said the friar. "She has certainly a high spirit; but it is the wing of the eagle, without his beak or his claw. She is as gentle as magnanimous; but it is the gentleness of the summer wind, which, however lightly it wave the tuft of the pine, carries with it the intimation of a power, that, if roused to its extremity, could make it bend to the dust."

"From the warmth of your panegyric, ghostly father," said the knight, "I should almost suspect you were in love with the damsel."

"So I am," said the friar, "and I care not who knows it; but all in the way of honesty, master soldier. I am, as it were, her spiritual lover; and were she a damsel errant, I would be her ghostly esquire, her friar militant. I would buckle me in armour of proof, and the devil might thresh me black with an iron flail, before I would knock under in her cause. Though they be not yet one canonically, thanks to your soldiership, the earl is her liege lord, and she is his liege lady. I am her father confessor and ghostly director: I have taken on me to show her the way to the next world; and how can I do that if I lose sight of her in this? seeing that this is but the road to the other, and has so many circumvolutions and ramifications of bye-ways and beaten paths (all more thickly set than the true one with finger-posts and mile-stones, not one of which tells truth), that a traveller has need of some one who knows the way, or the odds go hard against him that he will ever see the face of Saint Petér."

"But there must surely be some reason," said Sir Ralph, "for father Peter's apprehension."

"None," said brother Michael, "but the apprehension itself; fear being its own father, and most prolific in self-propagation. The lady did, it is true, once signalize her displeasure against our little brother, for reprimanding her in that she would go hunting a-mornings instead of attending matins. She cut short the thread of his eloquence by sportively drawing her bow-string and loosing an arrow over his head; he waddled off with singular speed; and was in much awe of her for many months. I thought he had forgotten it: but let that pass. In truth, she would have had little of her lover's company, if she had liked the chaunt of the choristers better than the cry of the hounds: yet I know not; for they were companions from the cradle, and reciprocally fashioned each other to the love of the fern and the fox-glove. Had either been less sylvan, the other might have been more saintly; but they will now never hear matins but those of the lark, nor reverence vaulted aisle but that of the greenwood canopy: They are twin plants of the forest, and are identified with its growth.

For the slender beech and the sapling oak,
That grow by the shadowy rill,
You may cut down both at a single stroke,
You may cut down which you will

But this you must know, that as long as they grow,
Whatever change may be,
You never can teach either oak or beech
To be aught but a greenwood tree."

CHAPTER III.

Inflamed wrath in glowing breast. — BUTLER.

THE knight and the friar arriving at Arlingford Castle, and leaving their horses in the care of lady Matilda's groom, with whom the friar was in great favour, were ushered into a stately apartment, where they found the

baron alone, flourishing an enormous carving-knife over a brother baron — of beef — with as much vehemence of action as if he were cutting down an enemy. The baron was a gentleman of a fierce and choleric temperament: he was lineally descended from the redoubtable Fierabras of Normandy, who came over to England with the Conqueror, and who, in the battle of Hastings, killed with his own hand four-and-twenty Saxon cavaliers all on a row. The very excess of the baron's internal rage on the preceding day had smothered its external manifestation: he was so equally angry with both parties, that he knew not on which to vent his wrath. He was enraged with the earl for having brought himself into such a dilemma without his privity; and he was no less enraged with the king's men for their very unseasonable intrusion. He could willingly have fallen upon both parties, but he must necessarily have begun with one; and he felt that on whichever side he should strike the first blow, his retainers would immediately join battle. He had therefore contented himself with forcing away his daughter from the scene of action. In the course of the evening he had received intelligence that the earl's castle was in possession of a party of the king's men, who had been detached by Sir Ralph Montfaucon to seize on it during the earl's absence. The baron inferred from this that the earl's case was desperate; and those who have had the opportunity of seeing a rich friend fall suddenly into poverty, may easily judge by their own feelings how quickly and completely the whole moral being of the earl was changed in the baron's estimation. The baron immediately proceeded to require in his daughter's mind the same summary revolution that had taken place in his own, and considered himself exceedingly ill-used by her non-compliance. The lady had retired to her chamber, and the baron had passed a supperless and sleepless night, stalking about his apartments till an advanced hour of the morning, when hunger compelled him to summon into his presence the spoils of the buttery, which, being the intended array of an uneaten wedding feast, were more than usually abundant, and on which, when the knight and the friar entered, he was falling with desperate valour. He

looked up at them fiercely, with his mouth full of beef and his eyes full of flame, and rising, as ceremony required, made an awful bow to the knight, inclining himself forward over the table and presenting his carving-knife *en militaire*, in a manner that seemed to leave it doubtful whether he meant to show respect to his visitor, or to defend his provision: but the doubt was soon cleared up by his politely motioning the knight to be seated; on which the friar advanced to the table, saying, "For what we are going to receive," and commenced operations without further prelude by filling and drinking a goblet of wine. The baron at the same time offered one to Sir Ralph, with the look of a man in whom habitual hospitality and courtesy were struggling with the ebullitions of natural anger. They pledged each other in silence, and the baron, having completed a copious draught, continued working his lips and his throat, as if trying to swallow his wrath as he had done his wine. Sir Ralph, not knowing well what to make of these ambiguous signs, looked for instructions to the friar, who by significant looks and gestures seemed to advise him to follow his example and partake of the good cheer before him, without speaking till the baron should be more intelligible in his demeanour. The knight and the friar, accordingly, proceeded to refect themselves after their ride; the baron looking first at the one and then at the other, scrutinising alternately the serious looks of the knight and the merry face of the friar, till at length, having calmed himself sufficiently to speak, he said, "Courteous knight and ghostly father, I presume you have some other business with me than to eat my beef and drink my canary; and if so, I patiently await your leisure to enter on the topic."

"Lord Fitzwater," said Sir Ralph, "in obedience to my royal master, King Henry, I have been the unwilling instrument of frustrating the intended nuptials of your fair daughter; yet will you, I trust, owe me no displeasure for my agency herein, seeing that the noble maiden might otherwise by this time have been the bride of an outlaw."

"I am very much obliged to you, sir," said the baron; "very exceedingly obliged. Your solicitude for my daughter is truly paternal, and for a young man and a stranger

very singular and exemplary : and it is very kind withal to come to the relief of my insufficiency and inexperience, and concern yourself so much in that which concerns you not."

"You misconceive the knight, noble baron," said the friar. "He urges not his reason in the shape of a preconceived intent, but in that of a subsequent extenuation. True, he has done the lady Matilda great wrong——"

"How, great wrong?" said the baron. "What do you mean by great wrong? Would you have had her married to a wild fly-by-night, that accident made an earl and nature a deer-stealer? that has not wit enough to eat venison without picking a quarrel with monarchy? that flings away his own lands into the clutches of rascally friars, for the sake of hunting in other men's grounds, and feasting vagabonds that wear Lincoln green, and would have flung away mine into the bargain if he had had my daughter? What do you mean by great wrong?"

"True," said the friar: "great right, I meant."

"Right!" exclaimed the baron: "what right has any man to do my daughter right but myself? What right has any man to drive my daughter's bridegroom out of the chapel in the middle of the marriage ceremony, and turn all our merry faces into green wounds and bloody coxcombs, and then come and tell me he has done us great right?"

"True," said the friar: "he has done neither right nor wrong."

"But he has," said the baron, "he has done both, and I will maintain it with my glove."

"It shall not need," said Sir Ralph; "I will concede any thing in honour."

"And I," said the baron, "will concede nothing in honour: I will concede nothing in honour to any man."

"Neither will I, Lord Fitzwater," said Sir Ralph, "in that sense: but hear me. I was commissioned by the king to apprehend the Earl of Huntingdon. I brought with me a party of soldiers, picked and tried men, knowing that he would not lightly yield. I sent my lieutenant with a detachment to surprise the earl's castle in his absence, and

laid my measures for intercepting him on the way to his intended nuptials; but he seems to have had intimation of this part of my plan, for he brought with him a large armed retinue, and took a circuitous route, which made him, I believe, somewhat later than his appointed hour. When the lapse of time showed me that he had taken another track, I pursued him to the chapel; and I would have awaited the close of the ceremony, if I had thought that either yourself or your daughter would have felt desirous that she should have been the bride of an outlaw."

"Who said, sir," cried the baron, "that we were desirous of any such thing? But truly, sir, if I had a mind to the devil for a son-in-law, I would fain see the man that should venture to interfere."

"That would I," said the friar; "for I have undertaken to make her renounce the devil."

"She shall not renounce the devil," said the baron, "unless I please. You are very ready with your undertakings. Will you undertake to make her renounce the earl, who, I believe, is the devil incarnate? Will you undertake that?"

"Will I undertake," said the friar, "to make Trent run westward, or to make flame burn downward, or to make a tree grow with its head in the earth and its root in the air?"

"So then," said the baron, "a girl's mind is as hard to change as nature and the elements, and it is easier to make her renounce the devil than a lover. Are you a match for the devil, and no match for a man?"

"My warfare," said the friar, "is not of this world. I am militant not against man, but the devil, who goes about seeking what he may devour."

"Oh! does he so?" said the baron: "then I take it that makes you look for him so often in my buttery. Will you cast out the devil whose name is Legion, when you cannot cast out the imp whose name is Love?"

"Marriages," said the friar, "are made in heaven. Love is God's work, and therewith I meddle not."

"God's work, indeed!" said the baron, "when the

ceremony was cut short in the church. Could men have put them asunder, if God had joined them together? And the earl is now no earl, but plain Robert Fitz-Ooth: therefore, I'll none of him."

"He may atone," said the friar, "and the king may mollify. The earl is a worthy peer, and the king is a courteous king."

"He cannot atone," said Sir Ralph. "He has killed the king's men; and if the baron should aid and abet, he will lose his castle and land."

"Will I?" said the baron; "not while I have a drop of blood in my veins. He that comes to take them shall first serve me as the friar serves my flasks of canary: he shall drain me dry as hay. Am I not disparaged? Am I not outraged? Is not my daughter vilified, and made a mockery? A girl half-married? There was my butler brought home with a broken head. My butler, friar: there is that may move your sympathy. Friar, the earl-no-earl shall come no more to my daughter."

"Very good," said the friar.

"It is not very good," said the baron, "for I cannot get her to say so."

"I fear," said Sir Ralph, "the young lady must be much distressed and discomposed."

"Not a-whit, sir," said the baron. "She is, as usual, in a most provoking imperturbability, and contradicts me so smilingly that it would enrage you to see her."

"I had hoped," said Sir Ralph, "that I might have seen her, to make my excuse in person for the hard necessity of my duty."

He had scarcely spoken, when the door opened, and the lady made her appearance.

CHAPTER IV.

Are you mad, or what are you, that you squeak out your catches without mitigation or reinforce of voice? — *Twelfth Night*.

MATILDA, not dreaming of visitors, tripped into the apartment in a dress of forest green, with a small quiver by her side, and a bow and arrow in her hand. Her hair, black and glossy as the raven's wing, curled like wandering clusters of dark ripe grapes under the edge of her round bonnet; and a plume of black feathers fell back negligently above it, with an almost horizontal inclination, that seemed the habitual effect of rapid motion against the wind. Her black eyes sparkled like sunbeams on a river: a clear, deep, liquid radiance, the reflection of ethereal fire, — tempered, not subdued, in the medium of its living and gentle mirror. Her lips were half opened to speak as she entered the apartment; and with a smile of recognition to the friar, and a courtesy to the stranger knight, she approached the baron and said, "You are late at your breakfast, father."

"I am not at breakfast," said the baron. "I have been at supper: my last night's supper; for I had none."

"I am sorry," said Matilda, "you should have gone to bed supperless."

"I did not go to bed supperless," said the baron: "I did not go to bed at all: and what are you doing with that green dress and that bow and arrow?"

"I am going a-hunting," said Matilda.

"A-hunting!" said the baron. "What, I warrant you, to meet with the earl, and slip your neck into the same noose?"

"No," said Matilda: "I am not going out of our own woods to-day."

"How do I know that?" said the baron. "What surety have I of that?"

"Here is the friar," said Matilda. "He will be surety."

"Not he," said the baron: "he will undertake nothing but where the devil is a party concerned."

"Yes, I will," said the friar: "I will undertake any thing for the lady Matilda."

"No matter for that," said the baron: "she shall not go hunting to day."

"Why, father," said Matilda, "if you coop me up here in this odious castle, I shall pine and die like a lonely swan on a pool."

"No," said the baron, "the lonely swan does not die on the pool. If there be a river at hand, she flies to the river, and finds her a mate; and so shall not you."

"But," said Matilda, "you may send with me any, or as many, of your grooms as you will."

"My grooms," said the baron, "are all false knaves. There is not not a rascal among them but loves you better than me. Villains that I feed and clothe."

"Surely," said Matilda, "it is not villany to love me: if it be, I should be sorry my father were an honest man." The baron relaxed his muscles into a smile. "Or my lover either," added Matilda. The baron looked grim again.

"For your lover," said the baron, "you may give God thanks of him. He is as arrant a knave as ever poached."

"What, for hunting the king's deer?" said Matilda. "Have I not heard you rail at the forest laws by the hour?"

"Did you ever hear me," said the baron, "rail myself out of house and land? If I had done that, then were I a knave."

"My lover," said Matilda, "is a brave man, and a true man, and a generous man, and a young man, and a handsome man; aye, and an honest man too."

"How can he be an honest man," said the baron, "when he has neither house nor land, which are the better part of a man?"

"They are but the husk of a man," said Matilda, "the worthless coat of the chesnut: the man himself is the kernel."

"The man is the grape stone," said the baron, "and

the pulp of the melon. The house and land are the true substantial fruit, and all that give him savour and value."

"He will never want house or land," said Matilda, "while the meeting boughs weave a green roof in the wood, and the free range of the hart marks out the bounds of the forest."

"Vert and venison! vert and venison!" exclaimed the baron. "Treason and flat rebellion. Confound your smiling face! what makes you look so good-humoured? What! you think I can't look at you, and be in a passion? You think so, do you? We shall see. Have you no fear in talking thus, when here is the King's liegeman come to take us all into custody, and confiscate our goods and chattels?"

"Nay, Lord Fitzwater," said Sir Ralph, "you wrong me in your report. My visit is one of courtesy and excuse, not of menace and authority."

"There it is," said the baron: "every one takes a pleasure in contradicting me. Here is this courteous knight, who has not opened his mouth three times since he has been in my house except to take in provision, cuts me short in my story with a flat denial."

"Oh! I cry you mercy, sir knight," said Matilda; "I did not mark you before. I am your debtor for no slight favour, and so is my liege lord."

"Her liege lord!" exclaimed the baron, taking large strides across the chamber.

"Pardon me, gentle lady," said Sir Ralph. "Had I known you before yesterday, I would have cut off my right hand ere it should have been raised to do you displeasure."

"Oh sir," said Matilda, "a good man may be forced on an ill office: but I can distinguish the man from his duty." She presented to him her hand, which he kissed respectfully, and simultaneously with the contact thirty-two invisible arrows plunged at once into his heart, one from every point of the compass of his pericardia.

"Well, father," added Matilda, "I must go to the woods."

"Must you?" said the baron; "I say you must not."

"But I am going," said Matilda.

"But I will have up the drawbridge," said the baron.

"But I will swim the moat," said Matilda.

"But I will secure the gates," said the baron.

"But I will leap from the battlement," said Matilda.

"But I will lock you in an upper chamber," said the baron.

"But I will shred the tapestry," said Matilda, "and let myself down."

"But I will lock you in a turret," said the baron, "where you shall only see light through a loophole."

"But through that loophole," said Matilda, "will I take my flight, like a young eagle from its aerie; and, father, while I go out freely, I will return willingly: but if once I slip out through a loop-hole——" She paused a moment, and then added, singing,—

The love that follows fair
Will never its faith betray;
But the faith that is held in a chain
Will never be found again,
If a single link give way.

The melody acted irresistibly on the harmonious propensities of the friar, who accordingly sang in his turn,—

For hark! hark! hark!
The dog doth bark,
That watches the wild deer's lair.
The hunter awakes at the peep of the dawn,
But the lair it is empty, the deer it is gone,
And the hunter knows not where.

Matilda and the friar then sang together,—

Then follow, oh follow! the hounds do cry:
The red sun flames in the eastern sky:
The stag bounds over the hollow.
He that lingers to spirit, or loiters in hall,
Shall see us no more till the evening fall,
And no voice but the echo shall answer his call:
Then follow, oh follow, follow:
Follow, oh follow, follow!

During the process of this harmony, the baron's eyes wandered from his daughter to the friar, and from the friar to his daughter again, with an alternate expression of anger differently modified: when he looked on the friar, it was anger without qualification; when he looked on his daughter

it was still anger, but tempered by an expression of involuntary admiration and pleasure. These rapid fluctuations of the baron's physiognomy—the habitual, reckless, resolute merriment in the jovial face of the friar,—and the cheerful, elastic spirits that played on the lips and sparkled in the eyes of Matilda,—would have presented a very amusing combination to Sir Ralph, if one of the three images in the group had not absorbed his total attention with feelings of intense delight very nearly allied to pain. The baron's wrath was somewhat counteracted by the reflection that his daughter's good spirits seemed to show that they would naturally rise triumphant over all disappointments; and he had had sufficient experience of her humour to know that she might sometimes be led, but never could be driven. Then, too, he was always delighted to hear her sing, though he was not at all pleased in this instance with the subject of her song. Still he would have endured the subject for the sake of the melody of the treble, but his mind was not sufficiently attuned to unison to relish the harmony of the bass. The friar's accompaniment put him out of all patience, and—"So," he exclaimed, "this is the way, you teach my daughter to renounce the devil, is it? A hunting friar, truly! Who ever heard before of a hunting friar? A profane, roaring, bawling, bumper-bibbing, neck-breaking, catch-singing friar?"

"Under favour, bold baron," said the friar; but the friar was warm with canary, and in his singing vein; and he could not go on in plain unmusical prose. He therefore sang in a new tune,—

Though I be now a grey, grey friar,
Yet I was once a hale young knight;
The cry of my dogs was the only choir
In which my spirit did take delight.

Little I recked of matin bell,
But drowned its toll with my clanging horn;
And the only beads I loved to tell
Were the beads of dew on the spangled thorn.

The baron was going to storm, but the friar paused, and Matilda sang in repetition,—

Little I reck of matin bell,
But drown its toll with my clanging horn;
And the only beads I love to tell
Are the beads of dew on the spangled thorn.

And then she and the friar sang the four lines together,
and rang the changes upon them alternately.

Little I reck of matin bell,
sang the friar.

"A precious friar," said the baron.

But drown its toll with my clanging horn,
sang Matilda.

"More shame for you," said the baron.

And the only beads I love to tell
Are the beads of dew on the spangled thorn,
sang Matilda and the friar together.

"Penitent and confessor," said the baron: "a hopeful
pair truly."

The friar went on,—

An archer keen I was withal,
As ever did lean on greenwood tree;
And could make the fleetest roebuck fall,
A good three hundred yards from me.
Though changeful time, with hand severe,
Has made me now these joys forego,
Yet my heart bounds wheue'er I hear
Yoicks! hark away! and tally ho!

Matilda chimed in as before.

"Are you mad?" said the baron. "Are you insane?
Are you possessed? What do you mean? What in the
devil's name do you both mean?"

Yoicks! hark away! and tally ho!

roared the friar.

The baron's pent-up wrath had accumulated like the
waters above the dam of an overshot mill. The pond-head
of his passion being now filled to the utmost limit of its
capacity, and beginning to overflow in the quivering of his
lips and the flashing of his eyes, he pulled up all the flash-
boards at once, and gave loose to the full torrent of his in-
dignation, hy seizing, like furious Ajax, not a massy stone
more than two modern men could raise, but a vast dish of
beef more than fifty ancient yeomen could eat, and whirled
it like a coit, *in terrorem*, over the head of the friar, to the
extremity of the apartment,

Where it on oaken floor did settle,
With mighty din of ponderous metal.

"Nay father," said Matilda, taking the baron's hand, "do not harm the friar: he means not to offend you. My gaiety never before displeased you. Least of all should it do so now, when I have need of all my spirits to outweigh the severity of my fortune."

As she spoke the last words, tears started into her eyes, which, as if ashamed of the involuntary betraying of her feelings, she turned away to conceal. The baron was subdued at once. He kissed his daughter, held out his hand to the friar, and said, "Sing on, in God's name, and crack away the flasks till your voice swims in canary." Then turning to Sir Ralph, he said, "You see how it is, sir knight. Matilda is my daughter; but she has me in leading-strings, that is the truth of it."

CHAPTER V.

'Tis true, no lover has that power
To enforce a desperate amour,
As he that has two strings to his bow,
And turns for love and money too. — BUTLER.

THE friar had often had experience of the baron's testy humour; but it had always before confined itself to words, in which the habit of testiness often mingled more expression of displeasure than the internal feeling prompted. He knew the baron to be hot and choleric, but at the same time hospitable and generous; passionately fond of his daughter, often thwarting her in seeming, but always yielding to her in fact. The early attachment between Matilda and the Earl of Huntingdon had given the baron no serious reason to interfere with her habits and pursuits, which were so congenial to those of her lover; and not being overburdened with orthodoxy, that is to say, not being seasoned with more of the salt of the spirit than was necessary to preserve him from excommunication, confiscation, and philotheoparoptesism*, he was not sorry to encourage his daughter's choice of her con-

* Hoasting by a slow fire for the love of God.

fessor in brother Michael, who had more jollity and less hypocrisy than any of his fraternity, and was very little anxious to disguise his love of the good things of this world under the semblance of a sanctified exterior. The friar and Matilda had often sung duets together, and had been accustomed to the baron's chiming in with a stormy *capriccio*, which was usually charmed into silence by some sudden turn in the witching melodies of Matilda. They had therefore naturally calculated, as far as their wild spirits calculated at all, on the same effects from the same causes. But the circumstances of the preceding day had made an essential alteration in the case. The baron knew well, from the intelligence he had received, that the earl's offence was past remission : which would have been of less moment but for the awful fact of his castle being in the possession of the king's forces, and in those days possession was considerably more than eleven points of the law. The baron was therefore convinced that the earl's outlawry was infallible, and that Matilda must either renounce her lover, or become with him an outlaw and a fugitive. In proportion, therefore, to the baron's knowledge of the strength and duration of her attachment, was his fear of the difficulty of its ever being overcome : her love of the forest and the chase, which he had never before discouraged, now presented itself to him as matter of serious alarm ; and if her cheerfulness gave him hope on the one hand by indicating a spirit superior to all disappointments, it was suspicious to him on the other, as arising from some latent certainty of being soon united to the earl. All these circumstances concurred to render their songs of the vanished deer and greenwood archery and Yoicks and Harkaway, extremely *mal-a-propos*, and to make his anger boil and bubble in the cauldron of his spirit, till its more than ordinary excitement burst forth with sudden impulse into active manifestation.

But as it sometimes happens, from the might
Of rage in minds that can no farther go,
As high as they have mounted in despite
In their remission do they sink as low,
To our bold baron did it happen so.*

* Of these lines all that is not in italics belongs to Mr. Wordsworth : *Revelation and Independence*.

For his diseobolic exploit proved the climax of his rage, and was succeeded by an immediate sense that he had passed the bounds of legitimate passion ; and he sunk immediately from the very pinnacle of opposition to the level of implicit acquiescence. The friar's spirits were not to be marred by such a little incident. He was half-inclined, at first, to return the baron's compliment ; but his love of Matilda checked him ; and when the baron held out his hand, the friar seized it cordially, and they drowned all recollection of the affair by pledging each other in a cup of canary.

The friar, having stayed long enough to see every thing replaced on a friendly footing, rose, and moved to take his leave. Matilda told him he must come again on the morrow, for she had a very long confession to make to him. This the friar promised to do, and departed with the knight.

Sir Ralph, on reaching the abbey, drew his followers together, and led them to Locksley Castle, which he found in the possession of his lieutenant ; whom he again left there with a sufficient force to hold it in safe keeping in the king's name, and proceeded to London to report the results of his enterprise.

Now Henry our royal king was very wroth at the earl's evasion, and swore by Saint Thomas-à-Becket (whom he had himself translated into a saint by having him knocked on the head), that he would give the castle and lands of Locksley to the man who should bring in the earl. Hereupon ensued a process of thought in the mind of the knight. The eyes of the fair huntress of Arlingford had left a wound in his heart which only she who gave could heal. He had seen that the baron was no longer very partial to the outlawed earl, but that he still retained his old affection for the lands and castle of Locksley. Now the lands and castle were very fair things in themselves, and would be pretty appurtenances to an adventurous knight ; but they would be doubly valuable as certain passports to the father's favour, which was one step towards that of the daughter, or at least towards obtaining possession of her either quietly or perforce ; for the knight was not so nice in his love as to consider the lady's free grace a *sine qua non* : and to think

of being, by any means whatever, the lord of Locksley and Arlingford, and the husband of the bewitching Matilda, was to cut in the shades of futurity a vista very tempting to a soldier of fortune. He set out in high spirits with a chosen band of followers, and beat up all the country far and wide around both the Ouse and the Trent; but fortune did not seem disposed to second his diligence, for no vestige whatever could he trace of the earl. His followers, who were only paid with the wages of hope, began to murmur and fall off; for, as those unenlightened days were ignorant of the happy invention of paper machinery, by which one promise to pay is satisfactorily paid with another promise to pay, and that again with another in infinite series, they would not, as their wiser posterity has done, take those tenders for true pay which were not sterling; so that, one fine morning, the knight found himself sitting on a pleasant bank of the Trent, with only a solitary squire, who still clung to the shadow of preferment, because he did not see at the moment any better chance of the substance.

The knight did not despair because of the desertion of his followers: he was well aware that he could easily raise recruits if he could once find trace of his game; he, therefore, rode about indefatigably over hill and dale, to the great sharpening of his own appetite and that of his squire, living gallantly from inn to inn when his purse was full, and quartering himself in the king's name on the nearest ghostly brotherhood when it happened to be empty. An autumn and a winter had passed away, when the course of his perustrations brought him one evening into a beautiful sylvan valley, where he found a number of young women weaving garlands of flowers, and singing over their pleasant occupation. He approached them, and courteously inquired the way to the nearest town.

"There is no town within several miles," was the answer.

"A village, then, if it be but large enough to furnish an inn?"

"There is Gamwell just by, but there is no inn nearer than the nearest town."

"An abbey, then?"

"There is no abbey nearer than the nearest inn."

"A house then, or a cottage, where I may obtain hospitality for the night?"

"Hospitality!" said one of the young women; "you have not far to seek for that. Do you not know that you are in the neighbourhood of Gamwell-Hall?"

"So far from it," said the knight, "that I never heard the name of Gamwell-Hall before."

"Never heard of Gamwell-Hall?" exclaimed all the young women together, who could as soon have dreamed of his never having heard of the sky.

"Indeed, no," said Sir Ralph; "but I shall be very happy to get rid of my ignorance."

"And so shall I," said his squire; "for it seems that in this case knowledge will for once be a cure for hunger, wherewith I am grievously afflicted."

"And why are you so busy, my pretty damsels, weaving these garlands?" said the knight.

"Why, do you not know, sir," said one of the young women, "that to-morrow is Gamwell feast?"

The knight was again obliged, with all humility, to confess his ignorance.

"Oh! sir," said his informant, "then you will have something to see, that I can tell you; for we shall choose a Queen of the May, and we shall crown her with flowers, and place her in a chariot of flowers, and draw it with lines of flowers, and we shall hang all the trees with flowers, and we shall strew all the ground with flowers, and we shall dance with flowers, and in flowers, and on flowers, and we shall be all flowers."

"That you will," said the knight; "and the sweetest and brightest of all the flowers of the May, my pretty damsels." On which all the pretty damsels smiled at him and each other.

"And there will be all sorts of May-games, and there will be prizes for archery, and there will be the knight's ale, and the foresters' venison, and there will be Kit Scrapesqueak with his fiddle, and little Tom Whistlerap with his fife and tabor, and Sam Trumtwang with his harp, and Peter Muggledrone with his bagpipe, and how

"I shall dance with Will Whitethorn!" added the girl, clapping her hands as she spoke, and bounding from the ground with the pleasure of the anticipation.

A tall athletic young man approached, to whom the rustic maidens courtesied with great respect; and one of them informed Sir Ralph that it was young Master William Gamwell. The young gentleman invited and conducted the knight to the hall, where he introduced him to the old knight his father, and to the old lady his mother, and to the young lady his sister, and to a number of bold yeomen, who were laying siege to beef, brawn, and plum pie around a ponderous table, and taking copious draughts of old October. A motto was inscribed over the interior door, —

EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY :

an injunction which Sir Ralph and his squire showed remarkable alacrity in obeying. Old Sir Guy of Gamwell gave Sir Ralph a very cordial welcome, and entertained him during supper with several of his best stories, enforced with an occasional slap on the back, and pointed with a peg in the ribs; a species of vivacious eloquence in which the old gentleman excelled, and which is supposed by many of that pleasant variety of the human species, known by the name of choice fellows and conical dogs, to be the genuine tangible shape of the cream of a good joke.

CHAPTER VI.

What! shall we have incision? shall we embrew?
Henry IV.

OLD Sir Guy of Gamwell, and young William Gamwell, and fair Alice Gamwell, and Sir Ralph Montfaucon and his squire, rode together the next morning to the scene of the feast. They arrived on a village-green, surrounded with cottages peeping from among the trees by which the green

was completely encircled. The whole circle was hung round with one continuous garland of flowers, depending in irregular festoons from the branches. In the centre of the green was a May-pole hidden in boughs and garlands; and a multitude of round-faced bumpkins and cherry-cheeked lasses were dancing around it, to the quadruple melody of Scrapesqueak, Whistlerap, Trumtwang, and Muggledrone: harmony we must not call it; for, though they had agreed to a partnership in point of tune, each, like a true pains-taking man, seemed determined to have his time to himself: Muggledrone played *allegretto*, Trumtwang *allegro*, Whistlerap *presto*, and Scrapesqueak *prestissimo*. There was a kind of mathematical proportion in their discrepancy: while Muggledrone played the tune four times, Trumtwang played it five, Whistlerap six, and Scrapesqueak eight; for the latter completely distanced all his competitors, and indeed worked his elbow so nimbly that its outline was scarcely distinguishable through the mistiness of its rapid vibration.

While the knight was delighting his eyes and ears with these pleasant sights and sounds, all eyes were turned in one direction; and Sir Ralph, looking round, saw a fair lady in green and gold come riding through the trees, accompanied by a portly friar in grey, and several fair damsels and gallant groons. On their nearer approach, he recognised the lady Matilda and her ghostly adviser, brother Michael. A party of foresters arrived from another direction, and then ensued cordial interchanges of greeting, and collisions of hands and lips, among the Gamewells and the new-comers, — "How does my fair coz, Mawd?" and "How does my sweet coz, Mawd?" and "How does my wild coz, Mawd?" And "Eh! jolly friar, your hand, old boy:" and "Here, honest friar:" and "To me, merry friar:" and "By your favour, mistress Alice:" and "Hey! cousin Robin:" and "Hey! cousin Will:" and "Od's life! merry Sir Guy, you grow younger every year," — as the old knight shook them all in turn with one hand, and slapped them on the back with the other, in token of his affection. A number of young men and women advanced, some drawing, and others

dancing round, a floral car; and having placed a crown of flowers on Matilda's head, they saluted her Queen of the May, and drew her to the place appointed for the rural sports.

A hogshhead of ale was abroach under an oak, and a fire was blazing in an open space before the trees to roast the fat deer which the foresters brought. The sports commenced; and, after an agreeable series of bowling, coiting, pitching, hurling, racing, leaping, grinning, wrestling or friendly dislocation of joints, and cudgel-playing or amicable cracking of skulls, the trial of archery ensued. The conqueror was to be rewarded with a golden arrow from the hand of the Queen of the May, who was to be his partner in the dance till the close of the feast. This stimulated the knight's emulation: young Gamwell supplied him with a bow and arrow, and he took his station among the foresters, but had the mortification to be out-shot by them all, and to see one of them lodge the point of his arrow in the golden ring of the centre, and receive the prize from the hand of the beautiful Matilda, who smiled on him with particular grace. The jealous knight scrutinised the successful champion with great attention, and surely thought he had seen that face before. In the mean time the forester led the lady to the station. The luckless Sir Ralph drank deep draughts of love from the matchless grace of her attitudes, as, taking the bow in her left hand, and adjusting the arrow with her right, advancing her left foot, and gently curving her beautiful figure with a slight motion of her head that waved her black feathers and her ringleted hair, she drew the arrow to its head, and loosed it from her open fingers. The arrow struck within the ring of gold, so close to that of the victorious forester that the points were in contact, and the feathers were intermingled. Great acclamations succeeded, and the forester led Matilda to the dance. Sir Ralph gazed on her fascinating motions till the torments of baffled love and jealous rage became unendurable; and approaching young Gamwell, he asked him if he knew the name of that forester who was leading the dance with the Queen of the May?

"Robin, I believe," said young Gamwell carelessly; "I think they call him Robin."

"Is that all you know of him?" said Sir Ralph.

"What more should I know of him?" said young Gamwell.

"Then I can tell you," said Sir Ralph, "he is the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon, on whose head is set so large a price."

"Ay, is he?" said young Gamwell, in the same careless manner.

"He were a prize worth the taking," said Sir Ralph.

"No doubt," said young Gamwell.

"How think you?" said Sir Ralph: "are the foresters his adherents?"

"I cannot say," said young Gamwell.

"Is your peasantry loyal and well-disposed?" said Sir Ralph.

"Passing loyal," said young Gamwell.

"If I should call on them in the king's name," said Sir Ralph, "think you they would aid and assist?"

"Most likely they would," said young Gamwell, "one side or the other."

"Ay, but which side?" said the knight.

"That remains to be tried," said young Gamwell.

"I have King Henry's commission," said the knight, "to apprehend this earl that was. How would you advise me to act, being, as you see, without attendant force?"

"I would advise you," said young Gamwell, "to take yourself off without delay, unless you would relish the taste of a volley of arrows, a shower of stones, and a hail-storm of cudgel-blows, which would not be turned aside by a God save King Henry."

Sir Ralph's squire no sooner heard this, and saw by the looks of the speaker that he was not likely to prove a false prophet, than he clapped spurs to his horse and galloped off with might and main. This gave the knight a good excuse to pursue him, which he did with great celerity, calling, "Stop, you rascal." When the squire fancied himself safe out of the reach of pursuit, he checked his speed, and allowed the knight to come up with him. They

rode on several miles in silence, till they discovered the towers and spires of Nottingham, where the knight introduced himself to the sheriff, and demanded an armed force to assist in the apprehension of the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon. The sheriff, who was willing to have his share of the prize, determined to accompany the knight in person, and regaled him and his man with good store of the best; after which, they, with a stout retinue of fifty men, took the way to Gamwell feast.

"God's my life," said the sheriff, as they rode along, "I had as lief you would tell me of a service of plate. I much doubt if this outlawed earl, this forester Robin, be not the man they call Robin Hood, who has quartered himself in Sherwood Forest, and whom in endeavouring to apprehend I have fallen divers times into disasters. He has gotten together a band of disinherited prodigals, outlawed debtors, excommunicated heretics, elder sons that have spent all they had, and younger sons that never had any thing to spend; and with these he kills the king's deer, and plunders wealthy travellers of five-sixths of their money; but if they be abbots or bishops, then he despoils utterly."

The sheriff then proceeded to relate to his companion the adventure of the abbot of Doubleflask (which some grave historians have related of the abbot of Saint Mary's, and others of the bishop of Hereford): how the abbot, returning to his abbey in company with his high selerer, who carried in his portmanteau the rents of the abbey-lands, and with a numerous train of attendants, came upon four seeming peasants, who were roasting the king's venison by the king's highway: how, in just indignation at this flagrant infringement of the forest laws, he asked them what they meant, and they answered that they meant to dine: how he ordered them to be seized and bound, and led captive to Nottingham, that they might know wild-flesh to have been destined by Providence for licensed and privileged appetites, and not for the base hunger of unqualified knaves: how they prayed for mercy; and how the abbot swore by Saint Charity that he would show them none: how one of them thereupon drew a bugle-horn

from under his smock-frock and blew three blasts, on which the abbot and his train were instantly surrounded by sixty bowmen in green: how they tied him to a tree, and made him say mass for their sins: how they unbound him, and sate him down with them to dinner, and gave him venison and wild-fowl and wine, and made him pay for his fare all the money in his high selerer's portmantau, and enforced him to sleep all night under a tree in his cloak, and to leave the eloak behind him in the morning: how the abbot, light in poeket and heavy in heart, raised the country upon Robin Hood, for so he had heard the chief forester called by his men, and hunted him into an old woman's cottage: how Robin ehanged dresses with the old woman, and how the abbot rode in great triumph into Nottingham, having in eustody an old woman in a green doublet and breeches: how the old woman discovered herself: how the merry men of Nottingham laughed at the abbot: how the abbot railed at the old woman, and how the old woman out-railed the abbot, telling him that Robin had given her food and fire through the winter, which no abbot would ever do, but would rather take it from her for what he called the good of the church, by which he meant his own laziness and gluttony; and that she knew a true man from a false thief, and a free forester from a greedy abbot.

"Thus you see," added the sheriff, "how this villain perverts the deluded people by making them believe that those who tithe and toll upon them for their spiritual and temporal benefit are not their best friends and fatherly guardians; for he holds that in giving to boors and old women what he takes from priests and peers, he does but restore to the former what the latter had taken from them; and this the impudent varlet calls distributive justice. Judge now if any loyal subject can be safe in such neighbourhood."

While the sheriff was thus enlightening his companion concerning the offenders, and whetting his own indignation against them, the sun was fast sinking to the west. They rode on till they came in view of a bridge, which they saw a party approaching from the opposite side, and the knight

presently discovered that the party consisted of the lady Matilda and friar Michael, young Gamwell, cousin Robin, and about half-a-dozen foresters. The knight pointed out the earl to the sheriff, who exclaimed, "Here, then, we have him an easy prey;" and they rode on manfully towards the bridge, on which the other party made halt.

"Who be these," said the friar, "that come riding so fast this way? Now, as God shall judge me, it is that false knight Sir Ralph Montfaucon, and the sheriff of Nottingham, with a posse of men. We must make good our post, and led them dislodge us if they may."

The two parties were now near enough to parley; and the sheriff and the knight, advancing in the front of the cavalcade, called on the lady, the friar, young Gamwell, and the foresters, to deliver up that false traitor, Robert, formerly Earl of Huntingdon. Robert himself made answer by letting fly an arrow that struck the ground between the fore feet of the sheriff's horse. The horse reared up from the whizzing, and lodged the sheriff in the dust; and, at the same time, the fair Matilda favoured the knight with an arrow in his right arm, that compelled him to withdraw from the affray. His men lifted the sheriff carefully up, and replaced him on his horse, whom he immediately with great rage and zeal urged on to the assault with his fifty men at his heels, some of whom were intercepted in their advance by the arrows of the foresters and Matilda; while the friar, with an eight-foot staff, dislodged the sheriff a second time, and laid on him with all the vigour of the church militant on earth, in spite of his ejaculations of "Hey, friar Michael! What means this, honest friar? Hold, ghostly friar! Hold, holy friar!"—till Matilda interposed, and delivered the battered sheriff to the care of the foresters. The friar continued flourishing his staff among the sheriff's men, knocking down one, breaking the ribs of another, dislocating the shoulder of a third, flattening the nose of a fourth, cracking the skull of a fifth, and pitching a sixth into the river, till the few, who were lucky enough to escape with whole bones, clapped spurs to their horses and fled for their lives, under a farewell volley of arrows.

Sir Ralph's squire, meanwhile, was glad of the excuse of attending his master's wound to absent himself from the battle; and put the poor knight to a great deal of unnecessary pain by making as long a business as possible of extracting the arrow, which he had not accomplished when Matilda, approaching, extracted it with great facility, and bound up the wound with her scarf, saying, "I reclaim my arrow, sir knight, which struck where I aimed it, to admonish you to desist from your enterprise. I could as easily have lodged it in your heart."

"It did not need," said the knight, with rueful gallantry; "you have lodged one there already."

"If you mean to say that you love me," said Matilda, "it is more than I ever shall you: but if you will show your love by no further interfering with mine, you will at least merit my gratitude."

The knight made a wry face under the double pain of heart and body caused at the same moment by the material or martial, and the metaphorical or erotic arrow, of which the latter was thus barbed by a declaration more candid than flattering; but he did not choose to put in any such claim to the lady's gratitude as would bar all hopes of her love: he therefore remained silent; and the lady and her escort, leaving him and the sheriff to the care of the squire, rode on till they came in sight of Arlingford Castle, when they parted in several directions. The friar rode off alone; and after the foresters had lost sight of him they heard his voice through the twilight, singing,—

A staff, a staff, of a young oak graff,
That is both stoure and stiff,
Is all a good friar can needs desire
To shrive a proud sheriffe.
And thou, fine fellowe, who has tasted so
Of the forester's greenwood game,
Wilt be in no haste thy time to waste
In seeking more taste of the same:
Or thus can I read thee, and riddle thee well,
Thou hadst better by far be the devil in hell,
Than he sheriff of Nottingham.

CHAPTER VII.

Now, master sheriff, what's your will with me?

Henry IV.

MATILDA had carried her point with the baron of ranging at liberty whithersoever she would, under her positive promise to return home ; she was a sort of prisoner on parole : she had obtained this indulgence by means of an obsolete habit of always telling the truth and keeping her word, which our enlightened age has discarded with other barbarisms, but which had the effect of giving her father so much confidence in her, that he could not help considering her word a better security than locks and bars.

The baron had been one of the last to hear of the rumours of the new outlaws of Sherwood, as Matilda had taken all possible precautions to keep those rumours from his knowledge, fearing that they might cause the interruption of her greenwood liberty ; and it was only during her absence at Gamwell feast, that the butler, being thrown off his guard by liquor, forgot her injunctions, and regaled the baron with a long story of the right merry adventure of Robin Hood and the abbot of Doubleflask.

The baron was one morning, as usual, cutting his way valorously through a rampart of cold provision, when his cars were suddenly assailed by a tremendous alarm, and sallying forth, and looking from his castle wall, he perceived a large party of armed men on the other side of the moat, who were calling on the warder in the king's name to lower the drawbridge and raise the portcullis, which had both been secured by Matilda's order. The baron walked along the battlement till he came opposite to these unexpected visitors, who, as soon as they saw him, called out, "Lower the drawbridge, in the king's name."

"For what, in the devil's name?" said the baron.

"The sheriff of Nottingham," said one, "lies in bed grievously bruised, and many of his men are wounded, and several of them slain ; and Sir Ralph Montfaucon, knight, is

sore wounded in the arm ; and we are charged to apprehend William Gamwell the younger, of Gamwell Hall, and father Michael of Rubygill Abbey, and Matilda Fitzwater of Arlingford Castle, as agents and accomplices in the said breach of the king's peace."

"Breach of the king's fiddlestick !" answered the baron. "What do you mean by coming here with your cock and bull stories of my daughter grievously bruising the sheriff of Nottingham? You are a set of vagabond rascals in disguise ; and I hear, by the bye, there is a gang of thieves that has just set up business in Sherwood Forest : a pretty pretence, indeed, to get into my castle with force and arms, and make a famine in my buttery, and a drought in my cellar, and a void in my strong box, and a vacuum in my silver scullery."

"Lord Fitzwater," cried one, "take heed how you resist lawful authority : we will prove ourselves——"

"You will prove yourselves arrant knaves, I doubt not," answered the baron ; "but, villains, you shall be more grievously bruised by me than ever was the sheriff by my daughter (a pretty tale truly !), if you do not forthwith avoid my territory."

By this time the baron's men had flocked to the battlements, with long-bows and cross-bows, slings and stones, and Matilda with her bow and quiver at their head. The assailants, finding the castle so well defended, deemed it expedient to withdraw till they could return in greater force, and rode off to Rubygill Abbey, where they made known their errand to the father abbot, who, having satisfied himself of their legitimacy, and combed over the allegations, said that doubtless brother Michael had heinously offended ; but it was not for the civil law to take cognizance of the misdoings of a holy friar ; that he would summon a chapter of monks, and pass on the offender a sentence proportionate to his offence. The ministers of civil justice said that would not do. The abbot said it would do and should ; and bade them not provoke the meekness of his catholic charity to lay them under the curse of Rome. This threat had its effect, and the party rode off to Gamwell-Hall, where they found the Gamwells and their men just sitting down to dinner, which they

saved them the trouble of eating by consuming it in the king's name themselves, having first seized and bound young Gamwell ; all which they accomplished by dint of superior numbers, in despite of a most vigorous stand made by the Gamwellites in defence of their young master and their provisions.

The baron, meanwhile, after the ministers of justice had departed, interrogated Matilda concerning the alleged fact of the grievous bruising of the sheriff of Nottingham. Matilda told him the whole history of Gamwell feast, and of their battle on the bridge, which had its origin in a design of the sheriff of Nottingham to take one of the foresters into custody.

"Ay! ay!" said the baron, "and I guess who that forester was ; but truly this friar is a desperate fellow. I did not think there could have been so much valour under a grey frock. And so you wounded the knight in the arm. You are a wild girl, Mawd, — a chip of the old block, Mawd. A wild girl, and a wild friar, and three or four foresters, wild lads all, to keep a bridge against a tame knight, and a tame sheriff, and fifty tame varlets ; by this light, the like was never heard ! But do you know, Mawd, you must not go about so any more, sweet Mawd : you must stay at home, you must ensconce ; for there is your tame sheriff on the one hand, that will take you perforce ; and there is your wild forester on the other hand, that will take you without any force at all, Mawd : your wild forester, Robin, cousin Robin, Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest, that beats and binds bishops, spreads nets for archbishops, and hunts a fat abbot as if he were a buck : excellent game, no doubt, but you must hunt no more in such company. I see it now : truly I might have guessed before that the bold outlaw Robin, the most courteous Robin, the new thief of Sherwood Forest, was your lover, the earl that has been : I might have guessed it before, and what led you so much to the woods ; but you hunt no more in such company. No more May games and Gamwell feasts. My lands and castle would be the forfeit of a few more such pranks ; and I think they are as well in my hands as the king's, quite as well."

"You know, father," said Matilda, "the condition of keeping me at home: I get out if I can, and not on parole." |

"Ay! ay!" said the baron, "if you can; very true: watch and ward, Mawd, watch and ward is my word: if you can, is yours. The mark is set, and so start fair."

The baron would have gone on in this way for an hour; but the friar made his appearance with a long oak staff in his hand, singing,—

Drink and sing, and eat and laugh,
And so go forth to battle;
For the top of a skull and the end of a staff
Do make a ghostly rattle.

"Ho! ho! friar!" said the baron—"singing friar, laughing friar, roaring friar, fighting friar, hacking friar, thwacking friar; cracking, cracking, cracking friar; joke-cracking, bottle-cracking, skull-cracking friar!"

"And ho! ho!" said the friar,— "bold baron, old baron, sturdy baron, wordy baron, long baron, strong baron, mighty baron, flighty baron, mazed baron, crazed baron, hacked baron, thwacked baron; cracked, cracked, cracked baron; bone-cracked, scone-cracked, brain-cracked baron!"

"What do you mean," said the baron, "bully friar, by calling me hacked and thwacked?"

"Were you not in the wars?" said the friar, "where he who escapes unhacked does more credit to his heels than his arms. I pay tribute to your valour in calling you hacked and thwacked."

"I never was thwacked in my life," said the baron; "I stood my ground manfully, and covered my body with my sword. If I had had the luck to meet with a fighting friar indeed, I might have been thwacked, and soundly too; but I hold myself a match for any two laymen; it takes nine fighting laymen to make a fighting friar."

"Whence come you now, holy father?" asked Matilda.

"From Rubygill Abbey," said the friar, "whither I never return:

For I must seek some hermit cell,
Where I alone my beads may tell,
And on the wight who that way fares
Levy a toll for my ghostly pray'rs,
Levy a toll, levy a toll,
Levy a toll for my ghostly pray'rs."

"What is the matter then, father?" said Matilda.

"This is the matter," said the friar: "my holy brethren have held a chapter on me, and sentenced me to seven years' privation of wine. I therefore deemed it fitting to take my departure, which they would fain have prohibited. I was enforced to clear the way with my staff. I have grievously beaten my dearly beloved brethren: I grieve thereat; but they enforced me thereto. I have beaten them much; I mowed them down to the right and to the left, and left them like an ill-reaped field of wheat, ear and straw pointing all ways, scattered in singleness and jumbled in masses; and so bade them farewell, saying, Peace be with you. But I must not tarry, lest danger be in my rear: therefore, farewell, sweet Matilda; and farewell, noble baron; and farewell, sweet Matilda again, the alpha and omega of father Michael, the first and the last."

"Farewell, father," said the baron, a little softened; "and God send you be never assailed by more than fifty men at a time."

"Amen," said the friar, "to that good wish."

"And we shall meet again, father, I trust," said Matilda.

"When the storm is blown over," said the baron.

"Doubt it not," said the friar, "though flooded Trent were between us, and fifty devils guarded the bridge."

He kissed Matilda's forehead, and walked away without a song.

CHAPTER VIII.

Let gallows gape for dog: let man go free.

Henry V.

A PAGE had been brought up in Gamwell-Hall, who, while he was little, had been called Little John, and continued to be so called after he had grown to be a foot taller than any

other man in the house. He was full seven feet high. His latitude was worthy of his longitude, and his strength was worthy of both; and though an honest man by profession, he had practised archery on the king's deer for the benefit of his master's household, and for the improvement of his own eye and hand, till his aim had become infallible within the range of two miles. He had fought manfully in defence of his young master, took his captivity exceedingly to heart, and fell into bitter grief and boundless rage when he heard that he had been tried in Nottingham and sentenced to die. Alice Gamwell, at Little John's request, wrote three letters of one tenour; and Little John, having attached them to three blunt arrows, saddled the fleetest steed in old Sir Guy of Gamwell's stables, mounted, and rode first to Arlingford Castle, where he shot one of the three arrows over the battlements; then to Rubygill Abbey, where he shot the second into the abbey-garden; then back past Gamwell-Hall to the borders of Sherwood Forest, where he shot the third into the wood. Now the first of these arrows lighted in the nape of the neck of Lord Fitzwater, and lodged itself firmly between his skin and his collar; the second rebounded with the hollow vibration of a drumstick from the shaven sounce of the abbot of Rubygill; and the third pitched perpendicularly into the centre of a venison pasty in which Robin Hood was making incision.

Matilda ran up to her father in the court of Arlingford Castle, seized the arrow, drew off the letter, and concealed it in her bosom before the baron had time to look round, which he did with many expressions of rage against the impudent villain who had shot a blunt arrow into the nape of his neck.

"But you know, father," said Matilda, "a sharp arrow in the same place would have killed you; therefore the sending a blunt one was very considerate."

"Considerate, with a vengeance!" said the baron. "Where was the consideration of sending it at all? This is some of your forester's pranks. He has missed you in the forest, since I have kept watch and ward over

you, and by way of a love-token and a remembrance to you takes a random shot at me."

The abbot of Rubygill picked up the missile-missive or messenger arrow, which had rebounded from his shaven crown, with a very unghostly malediction on the sender, which he suddenly checked with a pious and consolatory reflection on the goodness of Providence in having blessed him with such a thickness of skull, to which he was now indebted for temporal preservation, as he had before been for spiritual promotion. He opened the letter, which was addressed to father Michael; and found it to contain an intimation that William Gamwell was to be hanged on Monday at Nottingham.

"And I wish," said the abbot, "father Michael were to be hanged with him: an ungrateful monster, after I had rescued him from the fangs of civil justice, to reward my lenity by not leaving a bone unbruised among the holy brotherhood of Rubygill."

Robin Hood extracted from his venison pasty a similar intimation of the evil destiny of his cousin, whom he determined, if possible, to rescue from the jaws of Cerberus.

The sheriff of Nottingham, though still sore with his bruises, was so intent on revenge, that he raised himself from his bed to attend the execution of William Gamwell. He rode to the august structure of retributive Themis, as the French call a gallows, in all the pride and pomp of shrievalty, and with a splendid retinue of well-equipped knaves and varlets, as our ancestors called honest serving-men.

Young Gamwell was brought forth with his arms pinioned behind him; his sister Alice and his father, Sir Guy, attending him in disconsolate mood. He had rejected the confessor provided by the sheriff, and had insisted on the privilege of choosing his own, whom Little John had promised to bring. Little John, however, had not made his appearance when the fatal procession began its march; but when they reached the place of execution, Little John appeared, accompanied by a ghostly friar.

"Sheriff," said young Gamwell, "let me not die with my hands pinioned: give me a sword, and set any odds of

your men against me, and let me die the death of a man, like the descendant of a noble house, which has never yet been stained with ignominy."

"No, no," said the sheriff; "I have had enough of setting odds against you. I have sworn you shall be hanged, and hanged you shall be."

"Then God have mercy on me," said young Gamwell; "and now, holy friar, shrive my sinful soul."

The friar approached.

"Let me see this friar," said the sheriff: "if he be the friar of the bridge, I had as lief have the devil in Nottingham; but he shall find me too much for him here."

"The friar of the bridge," said Little John, "as you very well know, sheriff, was father Michael of Rubygill Abbey, and you may easily see that this is not the man."

"I see it," said the sheriff; "and God he thanked for his absence."

Young Gamwell stood at the foot of the ladder. The friar approached him, opened his book, groaned, turned up the whites of his eyes, tossed up his arms in the air, and said "*Dominus vobiscum.*" He then crossed both his hands on his breast under the folds of his holy robes, and stood a few moments as if in inward prayer. A deep silence among the attendant crowd accompanied this action of the friar; interrupted only by the hollow tone of the death-bell, at long and dreary intervals. Suddenly the friar threw off his holy robes, and appeared a forester clothed in green, with a sword in his right hand and a horn in his left. With the sword he cut the bonds of William Gamwell, who instantly snatched a sword from one of the sheriff's men; and with the horn he blew a loud blast, which was answered at once by four bugles from the quarters of the four winds, and from each quarter came five-and-twenty bowmen running all on a row.

"Treason! treason!" cried the sheriff. Old Sir Guy sprang to his son's side, and so did Little John; and the four setting back to back, kept the sheriff and his men at bay till the bowmen came within shot and let fly their arrows among the sheriff's men, who, after a brief resistance,

fled in all directions. The forester, who had personated the friar, sent an arrow after the flying sheriff, calling with a strong voice, "To the sheriff's left arm, as a keepsake from Robin Hood." The arrow reached its destiny; the sheriff redoubled his speed, and, with the one arrow in his arm, did not stop to breathe till he was out of reach of another.

The foresters did not waste time in Nottingham, but were soon at a distance from its walls. Sir Guy returned with Alice to Gamwell-Hall; but thinking he should not be safe there, from the share he had had in his son's rescue, they only remained long enough to supply themselves with clothes and money, and departed, under the escort of Little John, to another seat of the Gamwells in Yorkshire. Young Gamwell, taking it for granted that his offence was past remission, determined on joining Robin Hood, and accompanied him to the forest, where it was deemed expedient that he should change his name; and he was rechristened without a priest, and with wine instead of water, by the immortal name of Scarlet.

CHAPTER IX.

Who set my man i' the stocks?——
I set him there, Sir: but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.—*Lear*.

THE baron was inflexible in his resolution not to let Matilda leave the castle. The letter, which announced to her the approaching fate of young Gamwell, filled her with grief, and increased the irksomeness of a privation which already preyed sufficiently on her spirits, and began to undermine her health. She had no longer the consolation of the society of her old friend father Michael: the little fat friar of Rubygill was substituted as the castle confessor, not without some misgivings in his ghostly bosom; but he was more allured by the sweet savour of the good things of

this world at Arlingford Castle, than deterred by his awe of the lady Matilda, which nevertheless was so excessive, from his recollection of the twang of the bow-string, that he never ventured to find her in the wrong, much less to enjoin any thing in the shape of penance, as was the occasional practice of holy confessors, with or without cause, for the sake of pious discipline, and what was in those days called social order, namely, the preservation of the privileges of the few who happened to have any, at the expence of the swinish multitude who happened to have none, except that of working and being shot at for the benefit of their betters, which is obviously not the meaning of social order in our more enlightened times : let us therefore be grateful to Providence, and sing *Te Deum laudamus* in chorus with the Holy Alliance.

The little friar, however, though he found the lady spotless, found the butler a great sinner : at least so it was conjectured, from the length of time he always took to confess him in the buttery.

Matilda became every day more pale and dejected : her spirit, which could have contended against any strenuous affliction, pined in the monotonous inaction to which she was condemned. While she could freely range the forest with her lover in the morning, she had been content to return to her father's castle in the evening, thus preserving underanged the balance of her duties, habits, and affections ; not without a hope that the repeal of her lover's outlawry might be eventually obtained, by a judicious distribution of some of his forest spoils among the holy fathers and saints-that-were-to-be, — pious proficient in the ecclesiastic art equestrian, who rode the conscience of King Henry with double-curb bridles, and kept it well in hand when it showed mettle and seemed inclined to rear and plunge. But the affair at Gamwell feast threw many additional difficulties in the way of the accomplishment of this hope ; and very shortly afterwards King Henry the Second went to make up in the next world his quarrel with Thomas-à-Becket ; and Richard Cœur de Lion made all England resound with preparations for the crusade, to the great delight of many zealous adventurers, who eagerly flocked under his

banner in the hope of enriching themselves with Saracen spoil, which they called fighting the battles of God. Richard, who was not remarkably scrupulous in his financial operations, was not likely to overlook the lands and castle of Locksley, which he appropriated immediately to his own purposes, and sold to the highest bidder. Now, as the repeal of the outlawry would involve the restitution of the estates to the rightful owner, it was obvious that it could never be expected from that most legitimate and most Christian king, Richard the First of England, the arch-crusader and anti-jacobin by excellence, — the very type, flower, cream, pink, symbol, and mirror of all the Holy Alliances that have ever existed on earth, excepting that he seasoned his superstition and love of conquest with a certain condiment of romantic generosity and chivalrous self-devotion, with which his imitators in all other points have found it convenient to dispense. To give freely to one man what he had taken forcibly from another, was generosity of which he was very capable; but to restore what he had taken to the man from whom he had taken it, was something that wore too much of the cool physiognomy of justice to be easily reconcileable to his kingly feelings. He had, besides, not only sent all King Henry's saints about their business, or rather about their no-business — their *fainéantise* — but he had laid them under rigorous contribution for the purposes of his holy war; and having made them refund to the piety of the successor what they had extracted from the piety of the precursor, he compelled them, in addition, to give him their blessing for nothing. Matilda, therefore, from all these circumstances, felt little hope that her lover would be any thing but an outlaw for life.

The departure of King Richard from England was succeeded by the episcopal regency of the bishops of Ely and Durham. Longchamp, bishop of Ely, proceeded to show his sense of Christian fellowship by arresting his brother bishop, and despoiling him of his share in the government; and to set forth his humility and loving-kindness in a retinue of nobles and knights who consumed in one night's entertainment some five years' revenue of their entertainer, and in a guard of fifteen hundred foreign soldiers, whom he

considered indispensable to the exercise of a vigour beyond the law in maintaining wholesome discipline over the refractory English. The ignorant impatience of the swinish multitude with these fruits of good living, brought forth by one of the meek who had inherited the earth, displayed itself in a general ferment, of which Prince John took advantage to make the experiment of getting possession of his brother's crown in his absence. He began by calling at Reading a council of barons, whose aspect induced the holy bishop to disguise himself (some say as an old woman, which, in the twelfth century, perhaps might have been a disguise for a bishop), and make his escape beyond sea. Prince John followed up his advantage by obtaining possession of several strong posts, and among others of the castle of Nottingham.

While John was conducting his operations at Nottingham, he rode at times past the castle of Arlingford. He stopped on one occasion to claim Lord Fitzwater's hospitality, and made most princely havoc among his venison and brawn. Now it is a matter of record among divers great historians and learned clerks, that he was then and there grievously smitten by the charms of the lovely Matilda, and that a few days after he despatched his travelling minstrel, or laureate, Harpiron *, (whom he retained at moderate wages, to keep a journal of his proceedings, and prove them all just and legitimate), to the castle of Arlingford, to make proposals to the lady. This Harpiron was a very useful person. He was always ready, not only to maintain the cause of his master with his pen, and to sing his eulogies to his harp, but to undertake at a moment's notice any kind of courtly employment, called dirty work by the profane, which the blessings of civil government, namely, his master's pleasure, and the interests of social order, namely, his own emolument, might require. In short,

Il eût l'emploi qui certes n'est pas mince,
Et qu'à la cour, où tout se print en beau,
On appelloit être l'ami du prince ;
Mais qu'à la ville, et surtout en province,
Les gens grossiers ont nommé maquerneau.

Prince John was of opinion that the love of a prince

* Harp-it-on ; or, a *corruption* of *Ἐγριον*, a creeping thing.

actual and king expectant, was in itself a sufficient honour to the daughter of a simple baron, and that the right divine of royalty would make it sufficiently holy without the rite divine of the church. He was, therefore, graciously pleased to fall into an exceeding passion, when his confidential messenger returned from his embassy in piteous plight, having been, by the baron's order, first tossed in a blanket and set in the stocks to cool, and afterwards ducked in the moat and set again in the stocks to dry. John swore to revenge horribly *this flagrant outrage* on royal prerogative, and to obtain possession of the lady by force of arms; and accordingly collected a body of troops, and marched upon Arlingford castle. A letter, conveyed as before on the point of a blunt arrow, announced his approach to Matilda: and lord Fitzwater had just time to assemble his retainers, collect a hasty supply of provision, raise the draw-bridge, and drop the portcullis, when the castle was surrounded by the enemy. The little fat friar, who during the confusion was asleep in the buttery, found himself, on awaking, inclosed in the besieged castle, and dolefully bewailed his evil chance.

CHAP. X.

A noble girl, i' faith. Heart! I think I fight with a familiar, or the ghost of a fencer. Call you this an amorous visage? Here's blood that would have served me these seven years, in broken heads and cut fingers, and now it runs out all together.—MIDDLETON. *Roaring Girl*.

PRINCE John sat down impatiently before Arlingford castle in the hope of starving out the besieged; but finding the duration of their supplies extend itself in an equal ratio with the prolongation of his hope, he made vigorous preparations for carrying the place by storm. He constructed an immense machine on wheels, which, being advanced to the edge of the moat, would lower a temporary bridge, of which one end would rest on the bank, and the other on

the battlements, and which, being well furnished with stepping boards, would enable his men to ascend the inclined plane with speed and facility. Matilda received intimation of this design by the usual friendly channel of a blunt arrow, which must either have been sent from some secret friend in the prince's camp, or from some vigorous archer beyond it: the latter will not appear improbable, when we consider that Robin Hood and Little John could shoot two English miles and an inch point-blank,

Come scrive Turpino, che non erra.

The machine was completed, and the ensuing morning fixed for the assault. Six men, relieved at intervals, kept watch over it during the night. Prince John retired to sleep, congratulating himself in the expectation that another day would place the fair culprit at his princely mercy. His anticipations mingled with the visions of his slumber, and he dreamed of wounds and drums, and sacking and firing the castle, and bearing off in his arms the beautiful prize through the midst of fire and smoke. In the height of this imaginary turmoil, he awoke, and conceived for a few moments that certain sounds which rang in his ears, were the continuation of those of his dream, in that sort of half-consciousness between sleeping and waking, when reality and phantasy meet and mingle in dim and confused resemblance. He was, however, very soon fully awake to the fact of his guards calling on him to arm, which he did in haste, and beheld the machine in flames, and a furious conflict raging around it. He hurried to the spot, and found that his camp had been suddenly assailed from one side by a party of foresters, and that the baron's people had made a sortie on the other, and that they had killed the guards, and set fire to the machine, before the rest of the camp could come to the assistance of their fellows.

The night was in itself intensely dark, and the fire-light shed around it a vivid and unnatural radiance. On one side; the crimson light quivered by its own agitation on the waveless moat, and on the bastions and buttresses of the castle, and their shadows lay in massy blackness on the illuminated walls: on the other, it shone upon the woods,

streaming far within among the open trunks, or resting on the closer foliage. The circumference of darkness bounded the scene on all sides: and in the centre raged the war; shields, helmets, and bucklers gleaming and glittering as they rang and clashed against each other; plumes confusedly tossing in the crimson light, and the massy light and shade that fell on the faces of the combatants, giving additional energy to their ferocious expression.

John, drawing nearer to the scene of action, observed two young warriors fighting side by side, one of whom wore the habit of a forester, the other that of a retainer of Arlingford. He looked intently on them both: their position towards the fire favoured the scrutiny; and the hawk's eye of love very speedily discovered that the latter was the fair Matilda. The forester he did not know: but he had sufficient tact to discern that his success would be very much facilitated by separating her from this companion, above all others. He therefore formed a party of men into a wedge, only taking especial care not to be the point of it himself, and drove it between them with so much precision, that they were in a moment far asunder.

"Lady Matilda," said John, "yield yourself my prisoner."

"If you would wear me, prince," said Matilda, "you must win me:" and without giving him time to deliberate on the courtesy of fighting with the lady of his love, she raised her sword in the air, and lowered it on his head with an impetus that would have gone nigh to fathom even that extraordinary depth of brain which always by divine grace furnishes the interior of a head-royal, if he had not very dexterously parried the blow. Prince John wished to disarm and take captive, not in any way to wound or injure, least of all to kill, his fair opponent. Matilda was only intent to get rid of her antagonist at any rate: the edge of her weapon painted his complexion with streaks of very unloverlike crimson, and she would probably have marred John's hand for ever signing Magna Charta, but that he was backed by the advantage of numbers, and that her sword broke short on the boss of his buckler. John was following up his advantage to make a captive of the lady, when he was sud-

denly felled to the earth by an unseen antagonist. Some of his men picked him carefully up, and conveyed him to his tent, stunned and stupified.

When he recovered, he found Harpiton diligently assisting in his recovery, more in the fear of losing his place than in that of losing his master: the prince's first inquiry was for the prisoner he had been on the point of taking at the moment when his *habeas corpus* was so unscasonably suspended. He was told that his people had been on the point of securing the said prisoner, when the devil suddenly appeared among them in the likeness of a tall friar, having his grey frock einctured with a sword-belt, and his crown, which whether it were shaven or no they could not see, surmounted with a helmet, and flourishing an eight-foot staff, with which he laid about him to the right and to the left, knocking down the prince and his men as if they had been so many nine-pins: in fine, he had rescued the prisoner, and made a clear passage through friend and foe, and in conjunction with a chosen party of archers, had covered the retreat of the baron's men and the foresters, who had all gone off in a body towards Sherwood forest.

Harpiton suggested that it would be desirable to sack the castle, and volunteered to lead the van on the occasion, as the defenders were withdrawn, and the exploit seemed to promise much profit and little danger: John considered that the castle would in itself be a great acquisition to him, as a stronghold in furtherance of his design on his brother's throne; and was determining to take possession with the first light of morning, when he had the mortification to see the castle burst into flames in several places at once. A piteous cry was heard from within, and while the prince was proclaiming a reward to any one who would enter into the burning pile, and elucidate the mystery of the doleful voice, forth waddled the little fat friar in an agony of fear, out of the fire into the frying-pan; for he was instantly taken into custody and carried before prince John, wringing his hands and tearing his hair.

"Are you the friar," said prince John, in a terrible voice, "that laid me prostrate in battle, mowed down my

men like grass, rescued my captive, and covered the retreat of my enemies? And, not content with this, have you now set fire to the castle in which I intended to take up my royal quarters?"

The little friar quaked like a jelly: he fell on his knees, and attempted to speak; but in his eagerness to vindicate himself from this accumulation of alarming charges, he knew not where to begin; his ideas rolled round upon each other like the radii of a wheel; the words he desired to utter, instead of issuing, as it were, in a right line from his lips, seemed to conglobate themselves into a sphere turning on its own axis in his throat: after several ineffectual efforts, his utterance totally failed him, and he remained gasping, with his mouth open, his lips quivering, his hands clasped together, and the whites of his eyes turned up towards the prince with an expression most ruefully imploring.

"Are you that friar?" repeated the prince.

Several of the by-standers declared that he was not that friar. The little friar, encouraged by this patronage, found his voice, and pleaded for mercy. The prince questioned him closely concerning the burning of the castle. The little friar declared, that he had been in too great fear during the siege to know much of what was going forward, except that he had been conscious during the last few days of a lamentable deficiency of provisions, and had been present that very morning at the broaching of the last butt of sack. Harpiton groaned in sympathy. The little friar added, that he knew nothing of what had passed since, till he heard the flames roaring at his elbow.

"Take him away, Harpiton," said the prince, "fill him with sack, and turn him out."

"Never mind the sack," said the little friar, "turn me out at once."

"A sad chance," said Harpiton, "to be turned out without sack."

But what Harpiton thought a sad chance the little friar thought a merry one, and went bounding like a fat buck towards the abbey of Rubygill.

An arrow, with a letter attached to it, was shot into the

camp, and carried to the prince. The contents were these : —

“ PRINCE JOHN, — I do not consider myself to have resisted lawful authority in defending my castle against you, seeing that you are at present in a state of active rebellion against your liege sovereign Richard : and if my provisions had not failed me, I would have maintained it till doomsday. As it is, I have so well disposed my combustibles that it shall not serve you as a strong hold in your rebellion. If you hunt in the chases of Nottinghamshire, you may catch other game than my daughter. Both she and I are content to be houseless for a time, in the reflection that we have deserved your enmity, and the friendship of Cœur-de-Lion.

“ FITZWATER.”

CHAPTER XI.

— Tuck, the merry friar, who many a sermon made
In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws, and their trade. — DRAYTON.

THE baron, with some of his retainers and all the foresters, halted at daybreak in Sherwood forest. The foresters quickly erected tents, and prepared an abundant breakfast of venison and ale.

“ Now, Lord Fitzwater,” said the chief forester, recognise your son-in-law that was to have been, in the outlaw Robin Hood.”

“ Ay, ay,” said the baron, “ I have recognised you long ago.”

“ And recognise your young friend Gamwell,” said the second, “ in the outlaw Scarlet.”

“ And Little John, the page,” said the third, “ in Little John the outlaw.”

“ And Father Michael, of Rubygill Abbey,” said the friar, “ in Friar Tuck, of Sherwood forest. Truly, I have a

chapel here hard by, in the shape of a hollow tree, where I put up my prayers for travellers, and Little John holds the plate at the door, 'for good praying deserves good paying.'

"I am in fine company," said the baron.

"In the very best of company," said the friar, "in the high court of Nature, and in the midst of her own nobility. Is it not so? This goodly grove is our palace: the oak and the beech are its colonnade and its canopy: the sun and the moon and the stars are its everlasting lamps: the grass, and the daisy, and the primrose, and the violet, are its many-coloured floor of green, white, yellow, and blue; the may-flower, and the woodbine, and the eglantine, and the ivy, are its decorations, its curtains, and its tapestry: the lark, and the thrush, and the linnet, and the nightingale, are its unhired minstrels and musicians. Robin Hood is king of the forest both by dignity of birth and by virtue of his standing army: to say nothing of the free choice of his people, which he has indeed, but I pass it by as an illegitimate basis of power. He holds his dominion over the forest, and its horned multitude of citizen-deer, and its swinish multitude or peasantry of wild boars, by right of conquest and force of arms. He levies contributions among them by the free consent of his archers, their virtual representatives. If they should find a voice to complain that we are 'tyrants and usurpers to kill and cook them-up in their assigned and native dwelling-place,' we should most convincingly admonish them, with point of arrow, that they have nothing to do with our laws but to obey them. Is it not written that the fat ribs of the herd shall be fed upon by the mighty in the land? And have not they withal my blessing? my orthodox, canonical, and archiepiscopal blessing? Do I not give thanks for them when they are well roasted and smoking under my nose? What title had William of Normandy to England, that Robin of Locksley has not to merry Sherwood? William fought for his claim. So does Robin. With whom, both? With any that would or will dispute it. William raised contributions. So does Robin. From whom, both? From all that they could or

can make pay them. Why did any pay them to William? Why do any pay them to Robin? For the same reason to both: because they could not or cannot help it. They differ indeed, in this, that William took from the poor and gave to the rich, and Robin takes from the rich and gives to the poor: and therein is Robin illegitimate: though in all else he is true prince. Scarlet and John, are they not peers of the forest? lords temporal of Sherwood? And am not I lord spiritual? Am I not archbishop? Am I not pope? Do I not consecrate their banner and absolve their sins? Are not they state, and am not I church? Are not they state monarchical, and am not I church militant? Do I not excommunicate our enemies from venison and brawn, and by 'r Lady, when need calls, beat them down under my feet? The state levies tax, and the church levies tithe. Even so do we. Mass, we take all at once. What then? It is tax by redemption and tithe by commutation. Your William and Richard can cut and come again, but our Robin deals with slippery subjects that come not twice to his exchequer. What need we then to constitute a court, except a fool and a laureate? For the fool, his only use is to make false knaves merry by art, and we are true men and are merry by nature. For the laureate, his only office is to find virtues in those who have none, and to drink sack for his pains. We have quite virtue enough to need him not, and can drink our sack for ourselves."

"Well preached, friar," said Robin Hood: "yet there is one thing wanting to constitute a court, and that is a queen. And now, lovely Matilda, look round upon these sylvan shades where we have so often roused the stag from his ferny covert. The rising sun smiles upon us through the stems of that beechen knoll. Shall I take your hand, Matilda, in the presence of this my court? Shall I crown you with our wild-wood coronal, and hail you queen of the forest? Will you be the queen Matilda of your own true king Robin?"

Matilda smiled assent.

"Not Matilda," said the friar: "the rules of our holy alliance require new birth. We have excepted in favour of Little John, because he is great John, and his name is a

misnomer. I sprinkle, not thy forehead with water, but thy lips with wine, and baptize thee MARIAN."

"Here is a pretty conspiracy," exclaimed the baron. "Why, you villanous friar, think you to nickname and marry my daughter before my face with impunity?"

"Even so, bold baron," said the friar; "we are strongest here. Say you, might overcomes right? I say no. There is no right but might; and to say that might overcomes right is to say that right overcomes itself: an absurdity most palpable. Your right was the stronger in Arlingford, and ours is the stronger in Sherwood. Your right was right as long as you could maintain it; so is ours. So is King Richard's, with all deference be it spoken; and so is King Saladin's; and their two rights are now committed in bloody fray, and that which overcomes will be right, just as long as it lasts, and as far as it reaches. And now if any of you know any just impediment——"

"Fire and fury," said the baron.

"Fire and fury," said the friar, "are modes of that might which constitutes right, and are just impediments to any thing against which they can be brought to bear. They are our good allies upon occasion, and would declare for us now if you should put them to the test."

"Father," said Matilda, "you know the terms of our compact: from the moment you restrained my liberty, you renounced your claim to all but compulsory obedience. The friar argues well. Right ends with might. Thick walls, dreary galleries, and tapestried chambers, were indifferent to me while I could leave them at pleasure, but have ever been hateful to me since they held me by force. May I never again have roof but the blue sky, nor canopy but the green leaves, nor barrier but the forest-bounds; with the foresters to my train, Little John to my page, Friar Tuck to my ghostly adviser, and Robin Hood to my liege lord. I am no longer lady Matilda Fitzwater, of Arlingford Castle, but plain Maid Marian, of Sherwood Forest."

"Long live Maid Marian!" re-echoed the foresters.

"Oh false girl!" said the baron, "do you renounce your name and parentage?"

"Not my parentage," said Marian, "but my name indeed: do not all maids renounce it at the altar?"

"The altar!" said the baron: "grant me patience! what do you mean by the altar?"

"Pile green turf," said the friar, "wreath it with flowers, and crown it with fruit, and we will show the noble baron what we mean by the altar."

The foresters did as the friar directed.

"Now, Little John," said the friar, "on with the cloak of the abbot of Doubleflask. I appoint thee my clerk: thou art here duly elected in full mote."

"I wish you were all in full mote together," said the baron, "and smooth wall on both sides."

"Punniest thou?" said the friar. "A heinous anti-christian offence. Why anti-christian? Because anti-catholic? Why anti-catholic? Because anti-roman. Why anti-roman? Because Carthaginian. Is not pun from Punic? *punica fides*: the very quint-essential quiddity of bad faith: double-visaged: double-tongued. He that will make a pun will—— I say no more. Fie on it. Stand forth, clerk. Who is the bride's father?"

"There is no bride's father," said the baron. "I am the father of Matilda Fitzwater."

"There is none such," said the friar. "This is the fair Maid Marian. Will you make a virtue of necessity, or will you give laws to the flowing tide? Will you give her, or shall Robin take her? Will you be her true natural father, or shall I commute paternity? Stand forth, Scarlet."

"Stand back, sirrah Scarlet," said the baron. "My daughter shall have no father but me. Needs must when the devil drives."

"No matter who drives," said the friar, "so that, like a well-disposed subject, you yield cheerful obedience to those who can enforce it."

"Mawd, sweet Mawd," said the baron, "will you then forsake your poor old father in his distress, with his castle in ashes, and his enemy in power?"

"Not so, father," said Marian; "I will always be your true daughter: I will always love, and serve, and watch,

and defend you: but neither will I forsake my plighted love, and my own liege lord, who was your choice before he was mine, for you made him my associate in infancy; and that he continued to be mine when he ceased to be yours, does not in any way show remissness in my duties or falling off in my affections. And though I here plight my troth at the altar to Robin, in the presence of this holy priest and pious clerk, yet. . . . Father, when Richard returns from Palestine, he will restore you to your barony, and perhaps, for your sake, your daughter's husband to the earldom of Huntingdon: should that never be, should it be the will of fate that we must live and die in the greenwood, I will live and die MAID MARIAN.*"

"A pretty resolution," said the baron, "if Robin will let you keep it."

"I have sworn it," said Robin. "Should I expose her tenderness to the perils of maternity, when life and death may hang on shifting at a moment's notice from Sherwood to Barnsdale, and from Barnsdale to the sea-shore? And why should I banquet when my merry men starve? Chastity is our forest law, and even the friar has kept it since he has been here."

"Truly so," said the friar: "for temptation dwells with ease and luxury: but the hunter is Hippolytus, and the huntress is Dian. And now, dearly beloved——"

The friar went through the ceremony with great unction, and Little John was most clerical in the intonation of his responses. After which, the friar sang, and Little John fiddled, and the foresters danced, Robin with Marian, and Scarlet with the baron; and the venison smoked, and the ale frothed, and the wine sparkled, and the sun went down on their unwearied festivity: which they wound up with the following song, the friar leading and the foresters joining chorus:

Oh! bold Robin Hood is a forester good,
As ever drew bow in the merry greenwood:
At his bugle's shrill singing the echoes are ringing,
The wild deer are springing for many a rood:
Its summons we follow, through brake, over hollow,
The thrice-blown shrill summons of bold Robin Hood.

* And therefore is she called Maid Marian,
Because she leads a spotless maiden life,
And shall till Robin's outlaw life have end. — OLD PLAY.

And what eye hath e'er seen such a sweet Maiden Queen,
 As Marian, the pride of the forester's green?
 A sweet garden-flower, she blooms in the bower,
 Where alone to this hour the wild rose has been:
 We hail her in duty the queen of all beauty:
 We will live, we will die, by our sweet Maiden queen.

And here's a grey friar, good as heart can desire,
 To atone all our sins as the case may require:
 Who with courage so stout, lays his oak-plant about,
 And puts to the rout all the foes of his choir:
 For we are his choristers, we merry foresters,
 Chorussing thus with our militant friar.

And Scarlet doth bring his good yew-bough and string,
 Prime minister is he of Robin our king:
 No mark is too narrow for little John's arrow,
 That hits a cock sparrow a mile on the wing:
 Robin and Mariën, Scarlet, and Little John,
 Long with their glory old Sherwood shall ring.

Each a good liver, for well-feathered quiver
 Doth furnish brawn, venison, and fowl of the river:
 But the best game we dish up, it is a fat bishop:
 When his angels we fish up, he proves a free giver:
 For a prelate so lowly has angels more holy,
 And should this world's false angels to sinners deliver.

Robin and Mariën, Scarlet and Little John,
 Drink to them one by one, drink as ye sing:
 Robin and Mariën, Scarlet and Little John,
 Echo to echo through Sherwood shall ring:
 Robin and Mariën, Scarlet and Little John,
 Long with their glory old Sherwood shall ring.

CHAPTER XII.

A single volume paramount: a code:
 A master spirit: a determined road. — WORDSWORTH.

THE next morning Robin Hood convened his foresters, and desired Little John, for the baron's edification, to read over the laws of their forest society. Little John read aloud with a stentorophonic voice.

"At a high court of foresters, held under the greenwood tree, an hour after sun-rise, Robin Hood President, William Scarlet Vice-President, Little John Secretary: the following articles, moved by Friar Tuck in his capacity of Peer Spiritual, and seconded by Much the Miller, were unanimously agreed to.

"The principles of our society are six: Legitimaey, Equity, Hospitality, Chivalry, Chastity, and Courtesy.

"The articles of Legitimacy are four:

"I. Our government is legitimate, and our society is founded on the one golden rule of right, consecrated by the universal consent of mankind, and by the practice of all ages, individuals, and nations: namely, To keep what we have, and to catch what we can.

"II. Our government being legitimate, all our proceedings shall be legitimate: wherefore we declare war against the whole world, and every forester is by this legitimate declaration legitimately invested with a roving commission, to make lawful prize of every thing that comes in his way.

"III. All forest laws but our own we declare to be null and void.

"IV. All such of the old laws of England as do not in any way interfere with, or militate against, the views of this honourable assembly, we will loyally adhere to and maintain. The rest we declare null and void as far as relates to ourselves, in all cases wherein a vigour beyond the law may be conducive to our own interest and preservation.

"The articles of Equity are three:

"I. The balance of power among the people being very much deranged, by one having too much and another nothing, we hereby resolve ourselves into a congress or court of equity, to restore as far as in us lies the said natural balance of power, by taking from all who have too much as much of the said too much as we can lay our hands on; and giving to those who have nothing such a portion thereof as it may seem to us expedient to part with.

"II. In all cases a quorum of foresters shall constitute a court of equity, and as many as may be strong enough to manage the matter in hand shall constitute a quorum.

"III. All usurers, monks, courtiers, and other drones of the great hive of society, who shall be found laden with any portion of the honey whereof they have wrongfully despoiled the industrious bee, shall be rightfully despoiled thereof in turn; and all bishops and abbots shall be bound

and beaten *, especially the abbot of Doncaster ; as shall also all sheriffs, especially the sheriff of Nottingham.

“ The articles of Hospitality are two :

“ I. Postmen, carriers and market-folk, peasants and mechanics, farmers and millers, shall pass through our forest dominions without let or molestation.

“ II. All other travellers through the forest shall be graciously invited to partake of Robin's hospitality ; and if they come not willingly they shall be compelled ; and the rich man shall pay well for his fare ; and the poor man shall feast scot free, and peradventure receive bounty in proportion to his desert and necessity.

“ The article of Chivalry is one :

“ I. Every forester shall, to the extent of his power, aid and protect maids, widows, and orphans, and all weak and distressed persons whomsoever : and no woman shall be impeded or molested in any way ; nor shall any company receive harm which any woman is in.

“ The article of Chastity is one :

“ I. Every forester, being Diana's forester and minion of the moon, shall commend himself to the grace of the Virgin, and shall have the gift of continency on pain of expulsion : that the article of chivalry may be secure from infringement, and maids, wives, and widows pass without fear through the forest.

“ The article of Courtesy is one :

“ I. No one shall miscall a forester. He who calls Robin Robert of Huntingdon, or salutes him by any other title or designation whatsoever except plain Robin Hood ; or who calls Marian Matilda Fitzwater, or salutes her by any other title or designation whatsoever except plain Maid Marian ; and so of all others ; shall for every such offence forfeit a mark, to be paid to the friar.

“ These byshoppes and these archlyshoppes
Ye shall them bete and hynde,”

says Robin Hood, in
in a literal, but in
for as all rich men
have been the fine
proposes to thresh
the grain with
he deths them to be bound and beaten :
and as Pharaoh's f. kine were
wheat, *mutatis mutandis*, be typical of fat kine.

Perhaps, however, this is to be taken not
the binding and beating of wheat :
the bishops and archbishops must
ing them, from which Robin merely
fat ears of wheat, so may fat ears of

"And these articles we swear to keep as we are good men and true. Carried by acclamation. God save King Richard.

"LITTLE JOHN, Secretary."

"Excellent laws," said the baron: "excellent, by the holy rood. William of Normandy, with my great great grandfather Fierabras at his elbow, could not have made better. And now, sweet Mawd——"

"A fine, a fine," cried the friar, "a fine, by the article of courtesy."

"Od's life," said the baron, "shall I not call my own daughter Mawd? Methinks there should be a special exception in my favour."

"It must not be," said Robin Hood: "our constitution admits no privilege."

"But I will commute," said the friar; for twenty marks a year duly paid into my ghostly pocket you shall call your daughter Mawd two hundred times a day."

"Gramercy," said the baron, "and I agree, honest friar, when I can get twenty marks to pay: for till Prince John be beaten from Nottingham, my rents are like to prove but scanty."

"I will trust," said the friar, "and thus let us ratify the stipulation; so shall our laws and your infringement run together in an amicable parallel."

"But," said Little John, "this is a bad precedent, master friar. It is turning discipline into profit, penalty into perquisite, public justice into private revenue. It is rank corruption, master friar."

"Why are laws made?" said the friar. "For the profit of somebody. Of whom? Of him who makes them first, and of others as it may happen. Was not I legislator in the last article, and shall I not thrive by my own law?"

"Well then, sweet Mawd," said the baron, "I must leave you, Mawd: your life is very well for the young and the hearty, but it squares not with my age or my humour. I must house, Mawd. I must find refuge: but where? That is the question."

"Where Sir Guy of Gamwell has found it," said Robin

Hood, "near the borders of Barnsdale. There you may dwell in safety with him and fair Alice, till King Richard return, and Little John shall give you safe conduct. You will have need to travel with caution, in disguise and without attendants, for Prince John commands all this vicinity, and will doubtless lay the country for you and Marian. Now it is first expedient to dismiss your retainers. If there be any among them who like our life, they may stay with us in the greenwood; the rest may return to their homes."

Some of the baron's men resolved to remain with Robin and Marian, and were furnished accordingly with suits of green, of which Robin always kept good store.

Marian now declared that as there was danger in the way to Barnsdale, she would accompany Little John and the baron, as she should not be happy unless she herself saw her father placed in security. Robin was very unwilling to consent to this, and assured her that there was more danger for her than the baron: but Marian was absolute.

"If so, then," said Robin, "I shall be your guide instead of Little John, and I shall leave him and Scarlet joint-regents of Sherwood during my absence, and the voice of Friar Tuck shall be decisive between them if they differ in nice questions of state policy." Marian objected to this, that there was more danger for Robin than either herself or the baron: but Robin was absolute in his turn.

"Talk not of my voice," said the friar; "for if Marian be a damsel errant, I will be her ghostly esquire."

Robin insisted that this should not be, for number would only expose them to greater risk of detection. The friar, after some debate, reluctantly acquiesced.

While they were discussing these matters, they heard the distant sound of horses' feet.

"Go," said Robin to Little John, "and invite yonder horseman to dinner."

Little John bounded away, and soon came before a young man, who was riding in a melancholy manner, with the bridle hanging loose on the horse's neck, and his eyes drooping towards the ground.

"Whither go you?" said Little John.

"Whithersoever my horse pleases," said the young man.

"And that shall be," said Little John, "whither I please to lead him. I am commissioned to invite you to dine with my master."

"Who is your master?" said the young man.

"Robin Hood," said Little John.

"The bold outlaw?" said the stranger. "Neither he nor you should have made me turn an inch aside yesterday; but to-day I care not."

"Then it is better for you," said Little John, "that you came to-day than yesterday, if you love dining in a whole skin: for my master is the pink of courtesy: but if his guests prove stubborn, he bastes them and his venison together, while the friar says mass before meat."

The young man made no answer, and scarcely seemed to hear what Little John was saying, who therefore took the horse's bridle and led him to where Robin and his foresters were setting forth their dinner. Robin seated the young man next to Marian. Recovering a little from his stupor, he looked with much amazement at her, and the baron, and Robin, and the friar; listened to their conversation, and seemed much astonished to find himself in such holy and courtly company. Robin helped him largely to mumble-pie and cygnet and pheasant, and the other dainties of his table; and the friar pledged him in ale and wine, and exhorted him to make good cheer. But the young man drank little, ate less, spake nothing, and every now and then sighed heavily.

When the repast was ended, "Now," said Robin, "you are at liberty to pursue your journey: but first be pleased to pay for your dinner."

"That would I gladly do, Robin," said the young man, "but all I have about me are five shillings and a ring. To the five shillings you shall be welcome, but for the ring I will fight while there is a drop of blood in my veins."

"Gallantly spoken," said Robin Hood. "A love-token, without doubt: but you must submit to our forest laws. Little John must search; and if he find no more

than you say, not a penny will I touch ; but if you have spoken false, the whole is forfeit to our fraternity."

"And with reason," said the friar ; "for thereby is the truth maintained. The abbot of Doubleflask swore there was no money in his valise, and Little John forthwith emptied it of four hundred pounds. Thus was the abbot's perjury but of one minute's duration ; for though his speech was false in the utterance, yet was it no sooner uttered than it became true, and we should have been *participes criminis* to have suffered the holy abbot to depart in falsehood : whereas he came to us a false priest, and we sent him away a true man. Marry, we turned his cloak to further account, and thereby hangs a tale that may be either said or sung ; for in truth I am minstrel here as well as chaplain ; I pray for good success to our just and necessary warfare, and sing thanksgiving odes when our foresters bring in booty :

Bold Robin has robed him in ghostly attire, !
And forth he is gone like a holy friar,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down :
And of two grey friars he soon was aware,
Regaling themselves with dainty fare,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

"Good morrow, good brothers," said bold Robin Hood,
"And what make you in the good greenwood,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down !
Now give me, I pray you, wine and food ;
For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown."

"Good brother," they said, "we would give you full fain,
But we have no more than enough for twain,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down."
"Then give me some money," said bold Robin Hood,
"For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown."

"No money have we, good brother," said they :
"Then," said he, "we three for money will pray :
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down :
And whatever shall come at the end of our prayer,
We three holy friars will piously share,
All on the fallen leaves so brown."

"We will not pray with thee, good brother. God wot :
For truly, good brother, thou pleasest us not,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down :"
Then up they both started from Robin to run.
But down on their knees Robin pulled them each one,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

The grey friars prayed with a doleful face,
 But bold Robin prayed with a right merry grace,
 Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down :
 And when they had prayed, their portmanteau he took,
 And from it a hundred good angels he shook,
 All on the fallen leaves so brown.

"The saints," said bold Robin, "have hearkened our prayer,
 And here's a good angel apiece for your share :
 If more you would have, you must win ere you wear :
 Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down :"
 Then he blew his good horn with a musical cheer,
 And fifty green bowmen came trooping full near,
 And away the grey friars they bounded like deer,
 All on the fallen leaves so brown.

CHAPTER XIII.

What can a young lassie, what shall a young lassie,
 What can a young lassie do wi' an auld man? — BURNS.

"HERE is but five shillings and a ring," said Little John,
 "and the young man has spoken true."

"Then," said Robin to the stranger, "if want of money be the cause of your melancholy, speak. Little John is my treasurer, and he shall disburse to you."

"It is, and it is not," said the stranger; "it is, because, had I not wanted money I had never lost my love; it is not, because, now that I have lost her, money would come too late to regain her."

"In what way have you lost her?" said Robin: "let us clearly know that she is past regaining, before we give up our wishes to restore her to you."

"She is to be married this day," said the stranger, "and perhaps is married by this, to a rich old knight; and yesterday I knew it not."

"What is your name?" said Robin.

"Allen," said the stranger.

"And where is the marriage to take place, Allen?" said Robin.

"At Edwinstow church," said Allen, "by the bishop of Nottingham."

"I know that bishop," said Robin; "he dined with me a month since, and paid three hundred pounds for his dinner. He has a good ear and loves music. The friar sang to him to some tune. Give me my harper's cloak, and I will play a part at this wedding."

"These are dangerous times, Robin," said Marian, "for playing pranks out of the forest."

"Fear not," said Robin; "Edwinstow lies not Nottingham-ward, and I will take my precautions."

Robin put on his harper's cloak, while Little John painted his eyebrows and cheeks, tipped his nose with red, and tied him on a comely beard. Marian confessed, that had she not been present at the metamorphosis, she should not have known her own true Robin. Robin took his harp and went to the wedding.

Robin found the bishop and his train in the church porch, impatiently expecting the arrival of the bride and bridegroom. The clerk was observing to the bishop that the knight was somewhat gouty, and that the necessity of walking the last quarter of a mile from the road to the churchyard probably detained the lively bridegroom rather longer than had been calculated upon.

"Oh! by my fay," said the music-loving bishop, "here comes a harper in the nick of time, and now I care not how long they tarry. Ho! honest friend, are you come to play at the wedding?"

"I am come to play anywhere," answered Robin, "where I can get a cup of sack; for which I will sing the praise of the donor in lofty verse, and emblazon him with any virtue which he may wish to have the credit of possessing, without the trouble of practising."

"A most courtly harper," said the bishop; "I will fill thee with sack; I will make thee a walking butt of sack, if thou wilt delight my ears with thy melodies."

"That will I," said Robin; "in what branch of my art shall I exert my faculty? I am passing well in all, from the anthem to the glee, and from the dirge to the coranto."

"It would be idle," said the bishop, "to give thee sack for playing me anthems, seeing that I myself do receive

sack for hearing them sung. Therefore, as the occasion is festive, thou shalt play me a coranto."

Robin struck up and played away merrily, the bishop all the while in great delight, noddling his head, and beating time with his foot, till the bride and bridegroom appeared. The bridegroom was richly apparelled, and came slowly and painfully forward, hobbling and leering, and pursing up his mouth into a smile of resolute defiance to the gout, and of tender complacency towards his lady love, who, shining like gold at the old knight's expense, followed slowly between her father and mother, her cheeks pale, her head drooping, her steps faltering, and her eyes reddened with tears.

Robin stopped his minstrelsy, and said to the bishop, "This seems to me an unfit match."

"What do you say, rascal?" said the old knight, hobbling up to him.

"I say," said Robin, "this seems to me an unfit match. What, in the devil's name, can you want with a young wife, who have one foot in flannels and the other in the grave?"

"What is that to thee, sirrah varlet?" said the old knight; "stand away from the porch, or I will fracture thy seonce with my cane."

"I will not stand away from the porch," said Robin, "unless the bride bid me, and tell me that you are her own true love."

"Speak," said the bride's father, in a severe tone, and with a look of significant menace. The girl looked alternately at her father and Robin. She attempted to speak, but her voice failed in the effort, and she burst into tears.

"Here is lawful cause and just impediment," said Robin, "and I forbid the banns."

"Who are you, villain?" said the old knight, stamping his sound foot with rage.

"I am the Roman law," said Robin, "which says that there shall not be more than ten years between a man and his wife; and here are five times ten: and so says the law of nature."

"Honest harper," said the bishop, "you are somewhat over-officious here, and less courtly than I deemed you. If you love sack, forbear; for this course will never bring you a drop. As to your Roman law, and your law of nature, what right have they to say any thing which the law of Holy Writ says not?"

"The law of Holy Writ does say it," said Robin; "I expound it so to say; and I will produce sixty commentators to establish my exposition."

And so saying, he produced a horn from beneath his cloak, and blew three blasts, and threescore bowmen in green came leaping from the bushes and trees; and young Allen was the first among them to give Robin his sword, while Friar Tuck and Little John marched up to the altar. Robin stripped the bishop and clerk of their robes, and put them on the friar and Little John; and Allen advanced to take the hand of the bride. Her cheeks grew red and her eyes grew bright, as she locked her hand in her lover's, and tripped lightly with him into the church.

"This marriage will not stand," said the bishop, "for they have not been thrice asked in church."

"We will ask them seven times," said Little John, "lest three should not suffice."

"And in the meantime," said Robin, "the knight and the bishop shall dance to my harping."

So Robin sat in the church porch and played away merrily, while his foresters formed a ring, in the centre of which the knight and bishop danced with exemplary alacrity; and if they relaxed their exertions, Scarlet gently touched them up with the point of an arrow.

The knight grimaced ruefully, and begged Robin to think of his gout.

"So I do," said Robin; "this is the true antipodagron: you shall dance the gout away, and be thankful to me while you live. I told you," he added to the bishop, "I would play at this wedding; but you did not tell me that you would dance at it. The next couple you marry, think of the Roman law."

The bishop was too much out of breath to reply; and

now the young couple issued from church, and the bride having made a farewell obeisance to her parents, they departed together with the foresters, the parents storming, the attendants laughing, the bishop puffing and blowing, and the knight rubbing his gouty foot, and uttering doleful lamentations for the gold and jewels with which he had so unwittingly adorned and dowered the bride.

CHAPTER XIV.

*As ye came from the Holy Land
 Of blessed Walsingham
 Oh met ye not with my true love,
 As by the way ye came? — OLD BALLAD.*

IN pursuance of the arrangement recorded in the twelfth chapter, the baron, Robin, and Marian disguised themselves as pilgrims returned from Palestine, and travelling from the sea-coast of Hampshire to their home in Northumberland. By dint of staff and cockle-shell, sandal and scrip, they proceeded in safety the greater part of the way (for Robin had many sly inns and resting-places between Barnsdale and Sherwood), and were already on the borders of Yorkshire, when, one evening, they passed within view of a castle, where they saw a lady standing on a turret, and surveying the whole extent of the valley through which they were passing. A servant came running from the castle, and delivered to them a message from his lady, who was sick with expectation of news from her lord in the Holy Land, and entreated them to come to her, that she might question them concerning him. This was an awkward occurrence: but there was no pretence for refusal, and they followed the servant into the castle. The baron, who had been in Palestine in his youth, undertook to be spokesman on the occasion, and to relate his own adventures to the lady as having happened to the lord in question. This preparation enabled him to be so minute and

circumstantial in his detail, and so coherent in his replies to her questions, that the lady fell implicitly into the delusion, and was delighted to find that her lord was alive and in health, and in high favour with the king, and performing prodigies of valour in the name of his lady, whose miniature he always wore in his bosom. The baron guessed at this circumstance from the customs of that age, and happened to be in the right.

"This miniature," added the baron, "I have had the felicity to see, and should have known you by it among a million." The baron was a little embarrassed by some questions of the lady concerning her lord's personal appearance; but Robin came to his aid, observing a picture suspended opposite to him on the wall, which he made a bold conjecture to be that of the lord in question; and making a calculation of the influences of time and war, which he weighed with a comparison of the lady's age, he gave a description of her lord sufficiently like the picture in its groundwork to be a true resemblance, and sufficiently differing from it in circumstances to be more an original than a copy. The lady was completely deceived, and entreated them to partake her hospitality for the night; but this they deemed it prudent to decline, and with many humble thanks for her kindness, and representations of the necessity of not delaying their homeward course, they proceeded on their way.

As they passed over the drawbridge, they met Sir Ralph Montfaucon and his squire, who were wandering in quest of Marian, and were entering to claim that hospitality which the pilgrims had declined. Their countenances struck Sir Ralph with a kind of imperfect recognition, which would never have been matured, but that the eyes of Marian, as she passed him, encountered his, and the images of those stars of beauty continued involuntarily twinkling in his sensorium to the exclusion of all other ideas, till memory, love, and hope concurred with imagination to furnish a probable reason for their haunting him so pertinaciously. Those eyes, he thought, were certainly the eyes of Matilda Fitzwater; and if the eyes were hers, it was extremely probable, if not logically consecutive,

that the rest of the body they belonged to was hers also. Now, if it were really Matilda Fitzwater, who were her two companions? The baron? Aye, and the elder pilgrim was something like him. And the earl of Huntingdon? Very probably. The earl and the baron might be good friends again, now that they were both in disgrace together. While he was revolving these cogitations, he was introduced to the lady, and after claiming and receiving the promise of hospitality, he inquired what she knew of the pilgrims who had just departed? The lady told him they were newly returned from Palestine, having been long in the Holy Land. The knight expressed some scepticism on this point. The lady replied, that they had given her so minute a detail of her lord's proceedings, and so accurate a description of his person, that she could not be deceived in them. This staggered the knight's confidence in his own penetration; and if it had not been a heresy in knighthood to suppose for a moment that there could be *in rerum naturâ* such another pair of eyes as those of his mistress, he would have acquiesced implicitly in the lady's judgment. But while the lady and the knight were conversing, the warder blew his bugle-horn, and presently entered a confidential messenger from Palestine, who gave her to understand that her lord was well; but entered into a detail of his adventures most completely at variance with the baron's narrative, to which not the correspondence of a single incident gave the remotest colouring of similarity. It now became manifest that the pilgrims were not true men; and Sir Ralph Montfaucon sat down to supper with his head full of cogitations, which we shall leave him to chew and digest with his pheasant and canary.

Meanwhile our three pilgrims proceeded on their way. The evening set in black and lowering, when Robin turned aside from the main track, to seek an asylum for the night, along a narrow way that led between rocky and woody hills. A peasant observed the pilgrims as they entered that narrow pass, and called after them: "Whither go you, my masters? there are rogues in that direction."

"Can you show us a direction," said Robin, "in which

there are none? If so, we will take it in preference." The peasant grinned, and walked away whistling.

The pass widened as they advanced, and the woods grew thicker and darker around them. Their path wound along the slope of a woody declivity, which rose high above them in a thick rampart of foliage, and descended almost precipitously to the bed of a small river, which they heard dashing in its rocky channel, and saw its white foam gleaming at intervals in the last faint glimmerings of twilight. In a short time all was dark, and the rising voice of the wind foretold a coming storm. They turned a point of the valley, and saw a light below them in the depth of the hollow, shining through a cottage-casement and dancing in its reflection on the restless stream. Robin blew his horn, which was answered from below. The cottage door opened: a boy came forth with a torch, ascended the steep, showed tokens of great delight at meeting with Robin, and lighted them down a flight of steps rudely cut in the rock, and over a series of rugged stepping-stones, that crossed the channel of the river. They entered the cottage, which exhibited neatness, comfort, and plenty, being amply enriched with pots, pans, and pipkins, and adorned with fitches of bacon and sundry similar ornaments, that gave goodly promise in the fire-light that gleaned upon the rafters. A woman, who seemed just old enough to be the boy's mother, had thrown down her spinning-wheel in her joy at the sound of Robin's horn, and was bustling with singular alacrity to set forth her festal ware and prepare an abundant supper. Her features, though not beautiful, were agreeable and expressive, and were now lighted up with such manifest joy at the sight of Robin, that Marian could not help feeling a momentary touch of jealousy, and a half-formed suspicion that Robin had broken his forest law, and had occasionally gone out of bounds, as other great men have done upon occasion, in order to reconcile the breach of the spirit, with the preservation of the letter, of their own legislation. However, this suspicion, if it could be said to exist in a mind so generous as Marian's, was very soon dissipated by the entrance of the woman's husband, who testified as

much joy as his wife had done at the sight of Robin ; and in a short time the whole of the party were amicably seated round a smoking supper of river-fish and wild wood fowl, on which the baron fell with as much alacrity as if he had been a true pilgrim from Palestine.

The husband produced some recondite flasks of wine, which were laid by in a binn consecrated to Robin, whose occasional visits to them in his wanderings were the festal days of these warm-hearted cottagers, whose manners showed that they had not been born to this low estate. Their story had no mystery, and Marian easily collected it from the tenour of their conversation. The young man had been, like Robin, the victim of an usurious abbot, and had been outlawed for debt, and his nut-brown maid had accompanied him to the depths of Sherwood, where they lived an unholy and illegitimate life, killing the king's deer, and never hearing mass. In this state, Robin, then earl of Huntingdon, discovered them in one of his huntings, and gave them aid and protection. When Robin himself became an outlaw, the necessary qualification or gift of continency was too hard a law for our lovers to subscribe to ; and as they were thus disqualified for foresters, Robin had found them a retreat in this romantic and secluded spot. He had done similar service to other lovers similarly circumstanced, and had disposed them in various wild scenes which he and his men had discovered in their flittings from place to place, supplying them with all necessities and comforts from the reluctant disgorgings of fat abbots and usurers. The benefit was in some measure mutual ; for these cottages served him as resting-places in his removals, and enabled him to travel untraced and unmolested ; and in the delight with which he was always received he found himself even more welcome than he would have been at an inn ; and this is saying very much for gratitude and affection together. The smiles which surrounded him were of his own creation, and he participated in the happiness he had bestowed.

The casements began to rattle in the wind, and the rain to beat upon the windows. The wind swelled to a hurricane, and the rain dashed like a flood against the glass.

The boy retired to his little bed, the wife trimmed the lamp, the husband heaped logs upon the fire: Robin broached another flask; and Mariah filled the baron's cup, and sweetened Robin's by touching its edge with her lips.

"Well," said the baron, "give me a roof over my head, be it never so humble. Your greenwood canopy is pretty and pleasant in sunshine; but if I were doomed to live under it, I should wish it were water-tight."

"But," said Robin, "we have tents and caves for foul weather, good store of wine and venison, and fuel in abundance."

"Ay, but," said the baron, "I like to pull off my boots of a night, which you foresters seldom do, and to ensconce myself thereafter in a comfortable bed. Your beech-root is over-hard for a couch, and your mossy stump is somewhat rough for a bolster."

"Had you not dry leaves," said Robin, "with a bishop's surplice over them? What would you have softer? And had you not an abbot's travelling cloak for a coverlet? What would you have warmer?"

"Very true," said the baron, "but that was an indulgence to a guest, and I dreamed all night of the sheriff of Nottingham. I like to feel myself safe," he added, stretching out his legs to the fire, and throwing himself back in his chair with the air of a man determined to be comfortable. "I like to feel myself safe," said the baron.

At that moment the woman caught her husband's arm, and all the party following the direction of her eyes, looked simultaneously to the window, where they had just time to catch a glimpse of an apparition of an armed head, with its plumage tossing in the storm, on which the light shone from within, and which disappeared immediately.

CHAPTER XV.

O knight, thou lack'st a cup of canary. When did I see thee so put down ?
TWELFTH NIGHT.

SEVERAL knocks, as from the knuckles of an iron glove, were given to the door of the cottage, and a voice was heard entreating shelter from the storm for a traveller who had lost his way. Robin arose and went to the door.

"What are you?" said Robin.

"A soldier," replied the voice: "an unfortunate adherent of Longchamp, flying the vengeance of Prince John."

"Are you alone?" said Robin.

"Yes," said the voice: "it is a dreadful night. Hospitable cottagers, pray give me admittance. I would not have asked it but for the storm. I would have kept my watch in the woods."

"That I believe," said Robin. "You did not reckon on the storm when you turned into this pass. Do you know there are rogues this way?"

"I do," said the voice.

"So do I," said Robin.

A pause ensued, during which Robin listening attentively caught a faint sound of whispering.

"You are not alone," said Robin. "Who are your companions?"

"None but the wind and the water," said the voice, "and I would I had them not."

"The wind and the water have many voices," said Robin, "but I never before heard them say, What shall we do?"

Another pause ensued: after which,

"Look ye, master cottager," said the voice, in an altered tone, "if you do not let us in willingly, we will break down the door."

"Ho ! ho !" roared the baron, "you are become plural are you, rascals? How many are there of you, thieves? What, I warrant, you thought to rob and murder a poor harmless cottager and his wife, and did not dream of a garrison? You looked for no weapon of opposition but spit, poker, and basting ladle, wielded by unskilful hands : but, rascals, here is short sword and long cudgel in hands well tried in war, wherewith you shall be drilled into culenders and beaten into mummy."

No reply was made, but furious strokes from without resounded upon the door. Robin, Marian, and the baron threw by their pilgrim's attire, and stood in arms on the defensive. They were provided with swords, and the cottager gave them bucklers and helmets, for all Robin's haunts were furnished with secret armouries. But they kept their swords sheathed, and the baron wielded a ponderous spear, which he pointed towards the door ready to run through the first that should enter, and Robin and Marian each held a bow with the arrow drawn to its head and pointed in the same direction. The cottager flourished a strong cudgel (a weapon in the use of which he prided himself on being particularly expert), and the wife seized the spit from the fire-place, and held it as she saw the baron hold his spear. The storm of wind and rain continued to beat on the roof and the casement, and the storm of blows to resound upon the door, which at length gave way with a violent crash, and a cluster of armed men appeared without, seemingly not less than twelve. Behind them rolled the stream now changed from a gentle and shallow river to a mighty and impetuous torrent, roaring in waves of yellow foam, partially reddened by the light that streamed through the open door, and turning up its convulsed surface in flashes of shifting radiance from restless masses of half-visible shadow. The stepping-stones, by which the intruders must have crossed, were buried under the waters. On the opposite bank the light fell on the stems and boughs of the rock-rooted oak and ash tossing and swaying in the blast, and sweeping the flashing spray with their leaves.

The instant the door broke, Robin and Marian loosed their arrows. Robin's arrow struck one of the assailants

in the juncture of the shoulder, and disabled his right arm : Marian's struck a second in the juncture of the knee, and rendered him unserviceable for the night. The baron's long spear struck on the mailed breastplate of a third, and being stretched to its full extent by the long-armed hero, drove him to the edge of the torrent, and plunged him into its eddies, along which he was whirled down the darkness of the descending stream, calling vainly on his comrades for aid, till his voice was lost in the mingled roar of the waters and the wind. A fourth springing through the door was laid prostrate by the cottager's cudgel : but the wife being less dexterous than her company, though an Amazon in strength, missed her pass at a fifth, and drove the point of the spit several inches into the right hand door-post as she stood close to the left, and thus made a new barrier which the invaders could not pass without dipping under it and submitting their necks to the sword : but one of the assailants seizing it with gigantic rage, shook it at once from the grasp of its holder and from its lodgment in the post, and at the same time made good the irruption of the rest of his party into the cottage.

Now raged an unequal combat, for the assailants fell two to one on Robin, Marian, the baron, and the cottager ; while the wife, being deprived of her spit, converted every thing that was at hand to a missile, and rained pots, pans, and pipkins on the armed heads of the enemy. The baron raged like a tiger, and the cottager laid about him like a thrasher. One of the soldiers struck Robin's sword from his hand and brought him on his knee, when the boy, who had been roused by the tumult and had been peeping through the inner door, leaped forward in his shirt, picked up the sword and replaced it in Robin's hand, who instantly springing up, disarmed and wounded one of his antagonists, while the other was laid prostrate under the dint of a brass cauldron launched by the Amazonian dame. Robin now turned to the aid of Marian, who was parrying most dexterously the cuts and slashes of her two assailants, of whom Robin delivered her from one, while a well-applied blow of her sword struck off the helmet of the other, who fell on his knees to beg a boon, and she recognised Sir

Ralph Montfaucon. The men who were engaged with the baron and the peasant, seeing their leader subdued, immediately laid down their arms and cried for quarter. The wife brought some strong rope, and the baron tied their arms behind them.

"Now, Sir Ralph," said Marian, "once more you are at my mercy."

"That I always am, cruel beauty," said the discomfited lover.

"Odso ! courteous knight," said the baron, "is this the return you make for my beef and canary, when you kissed my daughter's hand in token of contrition for your intermeddling at her wedding ? Heart, I am glad to see she has given you a bloody coxcomb. Slice him down, Mawd ! slice him down, and fling him into the river."

"Confess," said Marian, "what brought you here, and how did you trace our steps ?"

"I will confess nothing," said the knight.

"Then confess you, rascal," said the baron, holding his sword to the throat of the captive squire.

"Take away the sword," said the squire, "it is too near my mouth, and my voice will not come out for fear : take away the sword, and I will confess all." The baron dropped his sword, and the squire proceeded ; "Sir Ralph met you, as you quitted Lady Falkland's castle, and by representing to her who you were, borrowed from her such a number of her retainers as he deemed must ensure your capture, seeing that your familiar the friar was not at your elbow. We set forth without delay, and traced you first by means of a peasant who saw you turn into this valley, and afterwards by the light from the casement of this solitary dwelling. Our design was to have laid an ambush for you in the morning, but the storm and your observation of my unlucky face through the casement made us change our purpose ; and what followed you can tell better than I can, being indeed masters of the subject."

"You are a merry knave," said the baron, "and here is a cup of wine for you."

"Gramercy," said the squire, "and better late than

never : but I lacked a cup of this before. Had I been pot-valiant, I had held you play."

"Sir knight," said Marian, "this is the third time you have sought the life of my lord and of me, for mine is interwoven with his. And do you think me so spiritless as to believe that I can be yours by compulsion? Tempt me not again, for the next time shall be the last, and the fish of the nearest river shall commute the flesh of a recreant knight into the fast-day dinner of an uncarnivorous friar. I spare you now, not in pity but in scorn. Yet shall you swear to a convention never more to pursue or molest my lord or me, and on this condition you shall live."

The knight had no alternative but to comply, and swore, on the honour of knighthood, to keep the convention inviolate. How well he kept his oath we shall have no opportunity of narrating : *Di lui la nostra istoria più non parla.*

CHAPTER XVI.

Carry me over the water, thou fine fellowe. — OLD BALLAD.

THE pilgrims, without experiencing further molestation, arrived at the retreat of Sir Guy of Gamwell. They found the old knight a cup too low ; partly from being cut off from the scenes of his old hospitality and the shouts of his Nottinghamshire vassals, who were wont to make the rafters of his ancient hall re-echo to their revelry ; but principally from being parted from his son, who had long been the better half of his flask and pasty. The arrival of our visitors cheered him up ; and finding that the baron was to remain with him, he testified his delight and the cordiality of his welcome by pegging him in the ribs till he made him roar.

Robin and Marian took an affectionate leave of the baron and the old knight ; and before they quitted the vicinity of

Barnsdale, deeming it prudent to return in a different disguise, they laid aside their pilgrim's attire, and assumed the habits and appurtenances of wandering minstrels.

They travelled in this character safely and pleasantly, till one evening at a late hour they arrived by the side of a river, where Robin looking out for a mode of passage perceived a ferry-boat safely moored in a nook on the opposite bank ; near which a chimney sending up a wreath of smoke through the thick-set willows, was the only symptom of human habitation ; and Robin naturally conceiving the said chimney and wreath of smoke to be the outward signs of the inward ferryman, shouted " Over ! " with much strength and clearness ; but no voice replied, and no ferryman appeared. Robin raised his voice, and shouted with redoubled energy, " Over, Over, O-o-o-over ! " A faint echo alone responded " Over ! " and again died away into deep silence : but after a brief interval a voice from among the willows, in a strange kind of mingled intonation that was half a shout and half a song, answered :

Over, over, over, jolly, jolly rover,
Would you then come over ? Over, over, over ?
Jolly, jolly rover, here's one lives in clover :
Who finds the clover ? The jolly, jolly rover.
He finds the clover, let him then come over,
The jolly, jolly rover, over, over, over.

" I much doubt," said Marian, " if this ferryman do not mean by clover something more than the toll of his ferry-boat."

" I doubt not," answered Robin, " he is a levier of toll and tithe, which I shall put him upon proof of his right to receive, by making trial of his might to enforce."

The ferryman emerged from the willows and stepped into his boat. " As I live," exclaimed Robin, " the ferryman is a friar."

" With a sword," said Marian, " stuck in his rope girdle."

The friar pushed his boat off manfully, and was presently half over the river.

" It is friar Tuck," said Marian.

" He will scarcely know us," said Robin ; " and if he do not, I will break a staff with him for sport."

The friar came singing across the water: the boat touched the land: Robin and Marian stepped on board: the friar pushed off again.

"Silken doublets, silken doublets," said the friar: "slenderly lined, I trow: your wandering minstrel is always poor toll: your sweet angels of voices pass current for a bed and a supper at the house of every lord that likes to hear the fame of his valour without the trouble of fighting for it. What need you of purse or pouch? You may sing before thieves. Pedlars, pedlars: wandering from door to door with the small ware of lies and cajolery: exploits for carpet-knights; honesty for courtiers; truth for monks, and chastity for nuns: a good saleable stock that costs the vender nothing, defies wear and tear, and when it has served a hundred customers is as plentiful and as marketable as ever. But, sirrahs, I'll none of your balderdash. You pass not hence without clink of brass, or I'll knock your musical noddles together till they ring like a pair of cymbals. That will be a new tune for your minstrelships."

This friendly speech of the friar ended as they stepped on the opposite bank. Robin had noticed as they passed that the summer stream was low.

"Why, thou brawling mongrel," said Robin, "that whether thou be thief, friar, or ferryman, or an ill-mixed compound of all three, passes conjecture, though I judge thee to be simple thief, what barkest thou at thus? Villain, there is clink of brass for thee. Dost thou see this coin? Dost thou hear this music? Look and listen: for touch thou shalt not: my minstrelship defies thee. Thou shalt carry me on thy back over the water, and receive nothing but a cracked scone for thy trouble."

"A bargain," said the friar: "for the water is low, the labour is light, and the reward is alluring." And he stooped down for Robin, who mounted his back, and the friar waded with him over the river.

"Now, fine fellow," said the friar, "thou shalt carry me back over the water, and thou shalt have a cracked scone for thy trouble."

Robin took the friar on his back, and waded with him

into the middle of the river, when by a dexterous jerk he suddenly flung him off and plunged him horizontally over head and ears in the water. Robin waded to shore, and the friar, half swimming and half scrambling, followed.

"Fine fellow, fine fellow," said the friar, "now will I pay thee thy cracked sconce."

"Not so," said Robin, "I have not earned it: but thou hast earned it, and shalt have it."

It was not, even in those good old times, a sight of every day to see a troubadour and a friar playing at single-stick by the side of a river, each aiming with fell intent at the other's coxcomb. The parties were both so skilled in attack and defence, that their mutual efforts for a long time expended themselves in quick and loud rappings on each other's oaken staves. At length Robin by a dexterous feint contrived to score one on the friar's crown: but in the careless moment of triumph a splendid sweep of the friar's staff struck Robin's out of his hand into the middle of the river, and repaid his crack on the head with a degree of vigour that might have passed the bounds of a jest if Marian had not retarded its descent by catching the friar's arm.

"How now, recreant friar," said Marian; "what have you to say why you should not suffer instant execution, being detected in open rebellion against your liege lord? Therefore kneel down, traitor, and submit your neck to the sword of the offended law."

"Benefit of clergy," said the friar: "I plead my clergy. And is it you indeed, ye scapegraces? Ye are well disguised: I knew ye not, by my flask. Robin, jolly Robin, he buys a jest dearly that pays for it with a bloody coxcomb. But here is balm for all bruises, outward and inward. (The friar produced a flask of canary.) Wash thy wound twice and thy throat thrice with this solar concoction, and thou shalt marvel where was thy hurt. But what moved ye to this frolic? Knew ye not that ye could not appear in a mask more fashioned to move my bile than in that of these gilders and lackerers of the smooth surface of worthlessness, that bring the gold of true valour into disrepute, by stamping the baser metal with the fairer

impression? I marvelled to find any such given to fighting (for they have an old instinct of self-preservation): but I rejoiced thereat, that I might discuss to them poetical justice: and therefore have I cracked thy sounce: for which, let this be thy medicine."

"But wherefore," said Marian, "do we find you here, when we left you joint lord warden of Sherwood?"

"I do but retire to my devotions," replied the friar. "This is my hermitage, in which I first took refuge when I escaped from my beloved brethren of Rubygill; and to which I still retreat at times from the vanities of the world, which else might cling to me too closely, since I have been promoted to be peer-spiritual of your forest-court. For, indeed, I do find in myself certain indications and admonitions that my day has past its noon; and none more cogent than this: that daily of bad wine I grow more intolerant, and of good wine have a keener and more fastidious relish. There is no surer symptom of receding years. The ferryman is my faithful varlet. I send him on some pious errand, that I may meditate in ghostly privacy, when my presence in the forest can best be spared: and when can it be better spared than now, seeing that the neighbourhood of Prince John, and his incessant perquisitions for Marian, have made the forest too hot to hold more of us than are needful to keep up a quorum, and preserve unbroken the continuity of our forest-dominion? For, in truth, without your greenwood majesties, we have hardly the wit to live in a body, and at the same time to keep our necks out of jeopardy, while that arch-rebel and traitor John infests the precincts of our territory."

The friar now conducted them to his peaceful cell, where he spread his frugal board with fish, venison, wild-fowl, fruit, and canary. Under the compound operation of this *materia medica* Robin's wounds healed apace, and the friar, who hated minstrelsy, began as usual chirping in his cups. Robin and Marian chimed in with his tuneful humour till the midnight moon peeped in upon their revelry.

It was now the very witching time of night, when they heard a voice shouting, "Over!" They paused to listen,

and the voice repeated "Over!" in accents clear and loud, but which at the same time either were in themselves, or seemed to be, from the place and the hour, singularly plaintive and dreary. The friar fidgetted about in his seat: fell into a deep musing: shook himself, and looked about him: first at Marian, then at Robin, then at Marian again; filled and tossed off a eup of canary, and relapsed into his reverie.

"Will you not bring your passenger over?" said Robin. The friar shook his head and looked mysterious.

"That passenger," said the friar, "will never come over. Every full moon, at midnight, that voice calls, 'Over!' I and my varlet have more than once obeyed the summons, and we have sometimes had a glimpse of a white figure under the opposite trees: but when the boat has touched the bank, nothing has been to be seen; and the voice has been heard no more till the midnight of the next full moon."

"It is very strange," said Robin.

"Wondrous strange," said the friar, looking solemn.

The voice again called "Over!" in a long plaintive musical cry.

"I must go to it," said the friar, "or it will give us no peace. I would all my customers were of this world. I begin to think that I am Charon, and that this river is Styx."

"I will go with you friar," said Robin.

"By my flask," said the friar, "but you shall not."

"Then I will," said Marian.

"Still less," said the friar, hurrying out of the cell. Robin and Marian followed: but the friar outstepped them, and pushed off his boat.

A white figure was visible under the shade of the opposite trees. The boat approached the shore, and the figure glided away. The friar returned.

They re-entered the cottage, and sat some time conversing on the phenomenon they had seen. The friar sipped his wine, and after a time, said:

"There is a tradition of a damsel who was drowned here some years ago. The tradition is——"

But the friar could not narrate a plain tale : he therefore cleared his throat, and sang with due solemnity, in a ghostly voice :

A damsel came in midnight rain,
And called across the ferry :
The weary wight she called in vain,
Whose senses sleep did bury.
At evening, from her father's door -
She turned to meet her lover :
At midnight, on the lonely shore,
She shouted " Over, over ! "

She had not met him by the tree
Of their accustomed meeting,
And sad and sick at heart was she,
Her heart all wildly beating.
In chill suspense the hours went by,
The wild storm burst above her :
She turned her to the river nigh,
And shouted, " Over, over ! "

A dim, discoloured, doubtful light
The moon's dark veil permitted,
And thick before her troubled sight
Fantastic shadows flitted.
Her lover's form appeared to glide,
And beckon o'er the water :
Alas ! his blood that morn had dyed
Her brother's sword with slaughter.

Upon a little rock she stood,
To make her invocation :
She marked not that the rain-swoll'n flood
Was islanding her station.
The tempest mocked her feeble cry :
No saint his aid would give her :
The flood swelled high and yet more high,
And swept her down the river.

Yet oft beneath the pale moonlight,
When hollow winds are blowing,
The shadow of that maiden bright
Glides by the dark stream's flowing.
And when the storms of midnight rave,
While clouds the broad moon cover,
The wild gusts waft across the wave
The cry of, " Over, over ! "

While the friar was singing, Marian was meditating : and when he had ended she said, " Honest friar, you have misplaced your tradition, which belongs to the æstuary of a nobler river, where the damsel was swept away by the rising of the tide, for which your land-flood is an indifferent substitute. But the true tradition of this stream I think I myself possess, and I will narrate it in your own way :

It was a friar of orders free,
A friar of Ruhygill :
At the greenwood-tree a vow made he,
But he kept it very ill :
A vow made he of chastity,
But he kept it very ill.

He kept it, perchance, in the conscious shade
 Of the bounds of the forest wherein it was made :
 But he roamed where he listed, as free as the wind,
 And he left his good vow in the forest behind :
 For its woods out of sight were his vow out of mind,
 With the friar of Rubygill.

In lonely hut himself he shut,
 The friar of Rubygill ;
 Where the ghostly elf absolved himself,
 To follow his own good will :
 And he had no lack of canary sack,
 To keep his conscience still.
 And a damsel well knew, when at lonely midnight
 It gleamed on the waters, his signal-lamp-light :
 " Over! over!" she warbled with nightingale throat,
 And the friar sprung forth at the magical note,
 And she crossed the dark stream in his trim ferry-boat,
 With the friar of Rubygill.

" Look you now," said Robin, " if the friar does not blush. Many strange sights have I seen in my day, but never till this moment did I see a blushing friar."

" I think," said the friar, " you never saw one that blushed not, or you saw good canary thrown away. But you are welcome to laugh if it so please you. None shall laugh in my company, though it be at my expense, but I will have my share of the merriment. The world is a stage, and life is a farce, and he that laughs most has most profit of the performance. The worst thing is good enough to be laughed at, though it be good for nothing else ; and the best thing, though it be good for something else, is good for nothing better."

And he struck up a song in praise of laughing and quaffing, without further adverting to Marian's insinuated accusation ; being, perhaps, of opinion, that it was a subject on which the least said would be the soonest mended.

So passed the night. In the morning a forester came to the friar, with intelligence that Prince John had been compelled, by the urgency of his affairs in other quarters, to disembarass Nottingham Castle of his royal presence. Our wanderers returned joyfully to their forest-dominion, being thus relieved from the vicinity of any more formidable belligerent than their old bruised and beaten enemy the sheriff of Nottingham.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh! this life
 Is nobler than attending for a check,
 Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,
 Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk. — CYMBELINE.

So Robin and Marian dwelt and reigned in the forest, ranging the glades and the greenwoods from the matins of the lark to the vespers of the nightingale, and administering natural justice according to Robin's ideas of reetifying the inequalities of human condition: raising genial dews from the bags of the rich and idle, and returning them in fertilising showers on the poor and industrious: an operation which more enlightened statesmen have happily reversed, to the unspeakable benefit of the community at large. The light footsteps of Marian were impressed on the morning dew beside the firmer step of her lover, and they shook its large drops about them as they cleared themselves a passage through the thick tall fern, without any fear of catching cold, which was not much in fashion in the twelfth century. Robin was as hospitable as Cathmor; for seven men stood on seven paths to call the stranger to his feast. It is true, he superadded the small improvement of making the stranger pay for it: than which what could be more generous? For Cathmor was himself the prime giver of his feast, whereas Robin was only the agent to a series of strangers, who provided in turn for the entertainment of their successors; which is carrying the disinterestedness of hospitality to its acme. Marian often killed the deer,

Which Scarlet dressed, and Friar Tuck blessed,
 While Little John wandered in search of a guest.

Robin was very devout, though there was great unity in his religion: it was exclusively given to our Lady the Virgin, and he never set forth in a morning till he had said three prayers, and had heard the sweet voice of his Marian singing a hymn to their mutual patroness. Each of his

men had, as usual, a patron saint according to his name or taste. The friar chose a saint for himself, and fixed on Saint Botolph, whom he euphonised into Saint Bottle, and maintained that he was that very Panomphic Pantagrueian saint, well known in ancient France as a female divinity, by the name of La Dive Bouteille, whose oracular monosyllable "Trincq," is celebrated and understood by all nations, and is expounded by the learned doctor Alcofribas*, who has treated at large on the subject, to signify "drink." Saint Bottle, then, was the saint of Friar Tuck, who did not yield even to Robin and Marian in the assiduity of his devotions to his chosen patron. Such was their summer life, and in their winter caves they had sufficient furniture, ample provender, store of old wine, and assuredly no lack of fuel, with joyous music and pleasant discourse to charm away the season of darkness and storms.

Many moons had waxed and waned, when on the afternoon of a lovely summer day a lusty broad-boned knight was riding through the forest of Sherwood. The sun shone brilliantly on the full green foliage, and afforded the knight a fine opportunity of observing picturesque effects, of which it is to be feared he did not avail himself. But he had not proceeded far, before he had an opportunity of observing something much more interesting, namely, a fine young outlaw leaning, in the true Sherwood fashion, with his back against a tree. The knight was preparing to ask the stranger a question, the answer to which, if correctly given, would have relieved him from a doubt that pressed heavily on his mind, as to whether he was in the right road or the wrong, when the youth prevented the inquiry by saying: "In God's name, sir knight, you are late to your meals. My master has tarried dinner for you these three hours."

"I doubt," said the knight, "I am not he you wot of. I am no where bidden to day, and I know none in this vicinage."

* Alcofribas Nasier: an anagram of François Rabelais, and his assumed appellation.

The reader who desires to know more about this oracular divinity, may consult the said doctor Alcofribas Nasier, who will usher him into the adytum through the medium of the high priestess Bacbuc.

"We feared," said the youth, "your memory would be treacherous: therefore am I stationed here to refresh it."

"Who is your master?" said the knight; "and where does he abide?"

"My master," said the youth, "is called Robin Hood, and he abides hard by."

"And what knows he of me?" said the knight.

"He knows you," answered the youth, "as he does every way-faring knight and friar, by instinct."

"Gramercy," said the knight; "then I understand his bidding: but how if I say I will not come?"

"I am enjoined to bring you," said the youth. "If persuasion avail not, I must use other argument."

"Say'st thou so?" said the knight; "I doubt if thy stripling rhetoric would convince me."

"That," said the young forester, "we will see."

"We are not equally matched, boy," said the knight. "I should get less honour by thy conquest, than grief by thy injury."

"Perhaps," said the youth, "my strength is more than my seeming, and my cunning more than my strength. Therefore let it please your knighthood to dismount."

"It shall please my knighthood to chastise thy presumption," said the knight, springing from his saddle.

Hereupon, which in those days was usually the result of a meeting between any two persons anywhere, they proceeded to fight.

The knight had in an uncommon degree both strength and skill: the forester had less strength, but not less skill than the knight, and showed such a mastery of his weapon as reduced the latter to great admiration.

They had not fought many minutes by the forest clock, the sun; and had as yet done each other no worse injury than that the knight had wounded the forester's jerkin, and the forester had disabled the knight's plume; when they were interrupted by a voice from a thicket, exclaiming, "Well fought, girl: well fought. Mass, that had nigh been a shrewd hit. Thou owest him for that, lass. Marry, stand by, I'll pay him for thee."

The knight turning to the voice, beheld a tall friar issuing from the thicket, brandishing a ponderous cudgel.

"Who art thou?" said the knight.

"I am the church militant of Sherwood," answered the friar. "Why art thou in arms against our lady queen?"

"What meanest thou?" said the knight.

"Truly, this," said the friar, "is our liege lady of the forest, against whom I do apprehend thee in overt act of treason. What sayest thou for thyself?"

"I say," answered the knight, "that if this be indeed a lady, man never yet held me so long."

"Spoken," said the friar, "like one who hath done execution. Hast thou thy stomach full of steel? Wilt thou diversify thy repast with a taste of my oak-graff? Or wilt thou incline thine heart to our venison, which truly is cooling? Wilt thou fight? or wilt thou dine? or wilt thou fight and dine? or wilt thou dine and fight? I am for thee, choose as thou mayest."

"I will dine," said the knight; "for with lady I never fought before, and with friar I never fought yet, and with neither will I ever fight knowingly: and if this be the queen of the forest, I will not, being in her own dominions, be backward to do her homage."

So saying, he kissed the hand of Marian, who was pleased most graciously to express her approbation.

"Gramercy, sir knight," said the friar, "I laud thee for thy courtesy, which I deem to be no less than thy valour. Now do thou follow me, while I follow my nose, which scents the pleasant odour of roast from the depth of the forest recesses. I will lead thy horse, and do thou lead my lady."

The knight took Marian's hand, and followed the friar, who walked before them, singing:

When the wind blows, when the wind blows
From where under buck the dry log glows,
What guide can you follow,
O'er brake and o'er hollow,
So true as a ghostly, ghostly nose?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Robin and Richard were two pretty men.
Mother Goose's Melody.

THEY proceeded, following their infallible guide, first along a light elastic greensward under the shade of lofty and wide-spreading trees that skirted a sunny opening of the forest, then along labyrinthine paths, which the deer, the outlaw, or the woodman had made, through the close shoots of the young coppices, through the thick undergrowth of the ancient woods, through beds of gigantic fern that filled the narrow glades and waved their green feathery heads above the plume of the knight. Along these sylvan alleys they walked in single file; the friar singing and pioncering in the van, the horse plunging and floundering behind the friar, the lady following "in maiden meditation fancy-free," and the knight bringing up the rear, much marvelling at the strange company into which his stars had thrown him. Their path had expanded sufficiently to allow the knight to take Marian's hand again, when they arrived in the august presence of Robin Hood and his court.

Robin's table was spread under a high overarching canopy of living boughs, on the edge of a natural lawn of verdure starred with flowers, through which a swift transparent rivulet ran sparkling in the sun. The board was covered with abundance of choice food and excellent liquor, not without the comeliness of snow-white linen and the splendour of costly plate, which the sheriff of Nottingham had unwillingly contributed to supply, at the same time with an excellent cook, whom Little John's art had spirited away to the forest with the contents of his master's silver scullery.

An hundred foresters were here assembled over-ready for their dinner, some seated at the table and some lying in groups under the trees.

Robin bade courteous welcome to the knight, who took his seat between Robin and Marian at the festal board ; at which was already placed one strange guest in the person of a portly monk, sitting between Little John and Scarlet, with his rotund physiognomy elongated into an unnatural oval by the conjoint influence of sorrow and fear : sorrow for the departed contents of his travelling treasury, a good-looking valise which was hanging empty on a bough ; and fear for his personal safety, of which all the flasks and pasties before him could not give him assurance. The appearance of the knight, however, cheered him up with a semblance of protection, and gave him just sufficient courage to demolish a cygnet and a numble-pie, which he diluted with the contents of two flasks of canary sack.

But wine, which sometimes creates and often increases joy, doth also, upon occasion, heighten sorrow : and so it fared now with our portly monk, who had no sooner explained away his portion of provender, than he began to weep and bewail himself bitterly.

"Why dost thou weep, man ?" said Robin Hood. "Thou hast done thine embassy justly, and shalt have thy Lady's grace."

"Alack ! alack !" said the monk : "no embassy had I, luckless sinner, as well thou wottest, but to take to my abbey in safety the treasure whereof thou hast despoiled me."

"Propound me his case," said Friar Tuck, "and I will give him ghostly counsel."

"You well remember," said Robin Hood, "the sorrowful knight who dined with us here twelve months and a day gone by."

"Well do I," said Friar Tuck. "His lands were in jeopardy with a certain abbot, who would allow him no longer day for their redemption. Whereupon you lent to him the four hundred pounds which he needed, and which he was to repay this day, though he had no better security to give than our Lady the Virgin."

"I never desired better," said Robin, "for she never yet failed to send me my pay ; and here is one of her own

flock, this faithful and well-favoured monk of St. Mary's, hath brought it me duly, principal and interest to a penny, as Little John can testify, who told it forth. To be sure, he denied having it, but that was to prove our faith. We sought and found it."

"I know nothing of your knight," said the monk: "and the money was our own, as the Virgin shall bless me."

"She shall bless thee," said Friar Tuck, "for a faithful messenger."

The monk resumed his wailing. Little John brought him his horse. Robin gave him leave to depart. He sprang with singular nimbleness into the saddle, and vanished without saying, God give you good day.

The stranger knight laughed heartily as the monk rode off.

"They say, sir knight," said Friar Tuck, "they should laugh who win: but thou laughest who art likely to lose."

"I have won," said the knight, "a good dinner, some mirth, and some knowledge: and I cannot lose by paying for them."

"Bravely said," answered Robin. "Still it becomes thee to pay: for it is not meet that a poor forester should treat a rich knight. How much money hast thou with thee?"

"Troth, I know not," said the knight. "Sometimes much, sometimes little, sometimes none. But search, and what thou findest, keep: and for the sake of thy kind heart and open hand, be it what it may, I shall wish it were more."

"Then, since thou sayest so," said Robin, "not a penny will I touch. Many a false churl comes hither, and disburses against his will: and till there is lack of these, I prey not on true men."

"Thou art thyself a true man, right well I judge, Robin," said the stranger knight, "and seemest more like one bred in court than to thy present outlaw life."

"Our life," said the friar, "is a craft, an art, and a mystery. How much of it, think you, could be learned at court?"

"Indeed, I should say," said the stranger knight: "but I should apprehend very little."

"And so should I," said the friar: "for we should find very little of our bold open practice, but should hear abundance of praise of our principles. To live in seeming fellowship and secret rivalry; to have a hand for all, and a heart for none; to be everybody's acquaintance, and nobody's friend; to meditate the ruin of all on whom we smile, and to dread the secret stratagems of all who smile on us; to pilfer honours and despoil fortunes, not by fighting in daylight, but by sapping in darkness: these are arts which the court can teach, but which we, by 'r Lady, have not learned. But let your court-minstrel tune up his throat to the praise of your court-hero, then come our principles into play: then is our practice extolled: not by the same name, for their Richard is a hero, and our Robin is a thief: marry, your hero guts an exchequer, while your thief disembowels a portmanteau; your hero sacks a city, while your thief sacks a cellar: your hero marauds on a larger scale, and that is all the difference, for the principle and the virtue are one: but two of a trade cannot agree: therefore your hero makes laws to get rid of your thief, and gives him an ill name that he may hang him: for might is right, and the strong make laws for the weak, and they that make laws to serve their own turn do also make morals to give colour to their laws."

"Your comparison, friar," said the stranger, "fails in this: that your thief fights for profit, and your hero for honour. I have fought under the banners of Richard, and if, as you phrase it, he guts exchequers, and sacks cities, it is not to win treasure for himself, but to furnish forth the means of his greater and more glorious aim."

"Misconceive me not, sir knight," said the friar. "We all love and honour King Richard, and here is a deep draught to his health: but I would show you, that we foresters are miscalled by opprobrious names, and that our virtues, though they follow at humble distance, are yet truly akin to those of Cœur-de-Lion. I say not that Richard is a thief, but I say that Robin is a hero: and for honour, did ever yet man, miscalled thief, win greater

honour than Robin? Do not all men grace him, with some honourable epithet? The most gentle thief, the most courteous thief, the most bountiful thief, yea, and the most honest thief? Richard is courteous, bountiful, honest, and valiant: but so also is Robin: it is the false word that makes the unjust distinction. They are twin-spirits, and should be friends, but that fortune hath differently cast their lot: but their names shall descend together to the latest days, as the flower of their age and of England: for in the pure principles of freebootery, have they excelled all men; and to the principles of freebootery, diversely developed, belong all the qualities to which song and story concede renown."

"And you may add, friar," said Marian, "that Robin, no less than Richard, is king in his own dominion; and that if his subjects be fewer, yet are they more uniformly loyal."

"I would, fair lady," said the stranger, "that thy latter observation were not so true. But I nothing doubt, Robin, that if Richard could hear your friar, and see you and your lady, as I now do, there is not a man in England whom he would take by the hand more cordially than yourself."

"Gramercy, sir knight," said Robin—"But his speech was cut short by Little John calling, "Hark!"

All listened. A distant trampling of horses was heard. The sounds approached rapidly, and at length a group of horsemen glittering in holyday dresses was visible among the trees.

"God's my life!" said Robin, "what means this? To arms, my merry-men all."

"No arms, Robin," said the foremost horseman, riding up and springing from his saddle: "have you forgotten Sir William of the Lee?"

"No, by my fay," said Robin; "and right welcome again to Sherwood."

Little John bustled to re-array the disorganised economy of the table, and replace the dilapidations of the provender.

"I come late, Robin," said Sir William, "but I came

by a wrestling, where I found a good yeoman wrongfully beset by a crowd of sturdy varlets, and I staid to do him right."

"I thank thee for that, in God's name," said Robin, "as if thy good service had been to myself."

"And here," said the knight, "is thy four hundred pound; and my men have brought thee an hundred bows and as many well-furnished quivers; which I beseech thee to receive and to use as a poor token of my grateful kindness to thee: for me and my wife and children didst thou redeem from beggary."

"Thy bows and arrows," said Robin, "will I joyfully receive: but of thy money, not a penny. It is paid already. My Lady, who was thy security, hath sent it me for thee."

Sir William pressed, but Robin was inflexible.

"It is paid," said Robin, "as this good knight can testify, who saw my Lady's messenger depart but now."

Sir William looked round to the stranger knight, and instantly fell on his knee, saying, "God save King Richard."

The foresters, friar and all, dropped on their knees together, and repeated in chorus: "God save King Richard."

"Rise, rise," said Richard, smiling: "Robin is king here, as his lady hath shown. I have heard much of thee, Robin, both of thy present and thy former state. And this, thy fair forest-queen, is, if tales say true, the lady Matilda Fitzwater."

Marian signed acknowledgment.

"Your father," said the king, "has approved his fidelity to me, by the loss of his lands, which the newness of my return, and many public cares, have not yet given me time to restore: but this justice shall be done to him, and to thee also, Robin, if thou wilt leave thy forest-life and resume thy earldom, and be a peer of Cœur-de-Lion: for braver heart and juster hand I never yet found."

Robin looked round on his men.

"Your followers," said the king, "shall have free pardon, and such of them as thou wilt part with shall

have maintenance from me ; and if ever I confess to priest, it shall be to thy friar."

"Gramercy to your majesty," said the friar ; "and my inflictions shall be flasks of canary ; and if the number be (as in grave cases I may, peradventure, make it) too great for one frail mortality, I will relieve you by vicarious penance, and pour down my own throat the redundancy of the burden."

Robin and his followers embraced the king's proposal. A joyful meeting soon followed with the baron and Sir Guy of Gamwell : and Richard himself honoured with his own presence a formal solemnization of the nuptials of our lovers, whom he constantly distinguished with his peculiar regard.

The friar could not say, Farewell to the forest, without something of a heavy heart : and he sang as he turned his back upon its bounds, occasionally reverting his head :

Ye woods, that oft at sultry noon
Have o'er me spread your mossy shade :
Ye gushing streams, whose murmured tune
Has in my ear sweet music made,
While, where the dancing pebbles show
Deep in the restless fountain-pool
The gelid water's upward flow,
My second flask was laid to cool :

Ye pleasant sights of leaf and flower :
Ye pleasant sounds of bird and bee :
Ye sports of deer in sylvan bower :
Ye feasts beneath the greenwood tree :
Ye baskings in the vernal sun :
Ye slumbers in the summer dell :
Ye trophies that this arm has won :
And must ye hear your friar's farewell ?

But the friar's farewell was not destined to be eternal. He was domiciled as the family confessor of the earl and countess of Huntingdon, who led a discreet and courtly life, and kept up old hospitality in all its munificence, till the death of King Richard and the usurpation of John, by placing their enemy in power ; compelled them to return to their greenwood sovereignty ; which, it is probable, they would have before done from choice, if their love of sylvan liberty had not been counteracted by their desire to retain the friendship of Cour-de-Lion. Their old and tried ad-

herents, the friar among the foremost, flocked again round their forest-banner; and in merry Sherwood they long lived together, the lady still retaining her former name of Maid Marian, though the appellation was then as much a misnomer as that of Little John.

CROTCHET CASTLE.

*Le monde est plein de fous, et qui n'en veut pas voir,
Doit se tenir tout seul, et casser son miroir.*

[First published in 1831.]

Should once the world resolve to abolish
All that's ridiculous and foolish,
It would have nothing left to do,
To apply in jest or earnest to. — BUTLER.

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CROTCHET CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE VILLA.

Captain Jamy. I wad full fain hear some question 'tween you tway.
Henry V.

IN one of those beautiful vallies, through which the Thames (not yet polluted by the tide, the scouring of cities, or even the minor defilement of the sandy streams of Surrey,) rolls a clear flood through flowery meadows, under the shade of old beech woods, and the smooth mossy greensward of the chalk hills (which pour into it their tributary rivulets, as pure and pellucid as the fountain of Bandusium, or the wells of Scamander, by which the wives and daughters of the Trojans washed their splendid garments in the days of peace, before the coming of the Greeks); in one of those beautiful vallies, on a bold round-surfaced lawn, spotted with juniper, that opened itself in the bosom of an old wood, which rose with a steep, but not precipitous ascent, from the river to the summit of the hill, stood the castellated villa of a retired citizen. Ebenezer Mac Crotchet, Esquire, was the London-born offspring of a worthy native of the "north countrie," who had walked up to London on a commercial adventure, with all his surplus capital, not very neatly tied up in a not very clean handkerchief, suspended over his shoulder from the end of a hooked stick, extracted from the first hedge on his pilgrimage; and who, after having worked himself a step or two up the ladder of life, had won the virgin heart of the only daughter of a highly respectable merchant of Duke's Place, with whom he inherited the honest fruits of a long series of ingenuous dealings.

Mr. Mac Crotchet had derived from his mother the instinct, and from his father the rational principle, of enriching himself at the expense of the rest of mankind, by all the recognised modes of accumulation on the windy side of the law. After passing many years in the alley, watching the turn of the market, and playing many games almost as desperate as that of the soldier of Lucullus*, the fear of losing what he had so righteously gained predominated over the sacred thirst of paper-money; his caution got the better of his instinct, or rather transferred it from the department of acquisition to that of conservation. His friend, Mr. Ramsbottom, the zodiacal mythologist, told him that he had done well to withdraw from the region of Uranus or Brahma, the maker, to that of Saturn or Veeshnu, the preserver, before he fell under the eye of Jupiter or Seva, the destroyer, who might have struck him down at a blow.

It is said, that a Scotchman returning home, after some years' residence in England, being asked what he thought of the English, answered: "They hanna ower muckle sense, but they are an unco braw people to live amang;" which would be a very good story, if it were not rendered apocryphal, by the incredible circumstance of the Scotchman going back.

Mr. Mac Crotchet's experience had given him a just title to make, in his own person, the last-quoted observation, but he would have known better than to go back, even if himself, and not his father, had been the first comer of his line from the north. He had married an English Christian, and, having none of the Scotch accent, was ungracious enough to be ashamed of his blood. He was desirous to obliterate alike the Hebrew and Caledonian vestiges in his name, and signed himself E. M. Crotchet, which by degrees induced the majority of his neighbours to think that his name was Edward Matthew. The more effectually to sink the Mac, he christened his villa Crotchet Castle, and determined to hand down to posterity the honours of Crotchet of Crotchet. He found

* Luculli miles, &c. *Hor. Ep.* II. 2. 26. "In Anna's wars, a soldier poor and bold," &c.—*POPE'S Imitation.*

it essential to his dignity to furnish himself with a coat of arms, which, after the proper ceremonies (payment being the principal), he obtained, videlicet: Crest, a crotchet rampant, in A sharp: Arms, three empty bladders, turgescient, to show how opinions are formed; three bags of gold, pendent, to show why they are maintained; three naked swords, tranchant, to show how they are administered; and three barbers' blocks, gaspant, to show how they are swallowed.

Mr. Crotchet was left a widower, with two children; and, after the death of his wife, so strong was his sense of the blessed comfort she had been to him, that he determined never to give any other woman an opportunity of obliterating the happy recollection.

He was not without a plausible pretence for styling his villa a castle, for, in its immediate vicinity, and within his own enclosed domain, were the manifest traces, on the brow of the hill, of a Roman station, or *castellum*, which was still called the castle by the country people. The primitive mounds and trenches, merely overgrown with greensward, with a few patches of juniper and box on the vallum, and a solitary ancient beech surmounting the place of the prætorium, presented nearly the same depths, heights, slopes, and forms, which the Roman soldiers had originally given them. From this *castellum* Mr. Crotchet christened his villa. With his rustic neighbours he was of course immediately and necessarily a squire: Squire Crotchet of the castle; and he seemed to himself to settle down as naturally into an English country gentleman, as if his parentage had been as innocent of both Scotland and Jerusalem, as his education was of Rome and Athens.

But as, though you expel nature with a pitchfork, she will yet always come back*; he could not become, like a true-born English squire, part and parcel of the harley-giving earth; he could not find in game-bagging, poacher-shooting, trespasser-pounding, footpath-stopping, common-enclosing, rack-renting, and all the other liberal pursuits and pastimes which make a country gentleman an ornament to the world, and a blessing to the poor; he

* *Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.* — HOR. EP. I. 10. 24.

could not find in these valuable and amiable occupations, and in a corresponding range of ideas, nearly commensurate with that of the great King Nebuchadnezzar, when he was turned out to grass; he could not find in this great variety of useful action, and vast field of comprehensive thought, modes of filling up his time that accorded with his Caledonian instinct. The inborn love of disputation, which the excitements and engagements of a life of business had smothered, burst forth through the calmer surface of a rural life. He grew as fain as Captain Jamy, "to hear some airgument betwixt ony tway;" and being very hospitable in his establishment, and liberal in his invitations, a numerous detachment from the advanced guard of the "march of intellect," often marched down to Crotchet Castle.

When the fashionable season filled London with exhibitors of all descriptions, lecturers and else, Mr. Crotchet was in his glory; for, in addition to the perennial literati of the metropolis, he had the advantage of the visits of a number of hardy annuals, chiefly from the north, who, as the interval of their metropolitan flowering allowed, occasionally accompanied their London brethren in excursions to Crotchet Castle.

Amongst other things, he took very naturally to political economy, read all the books on the subject which were put forth by his own countrymen, attended all lectures thereon, and boxed the technology of the sublime science as expertly as an able scaman boxes the compass.

With this agreeable mania he had the satisfaction of biting his son, the hope of his name and race, who had borne off from Oxford the highest academical honours; and who, treading in his father's footsteps to honour and fortune, had, by means of a portion of the old gentleman's surplus capital, made himself a junior partner in the eminent loan-jobbing firm of Catchflat and Company. Here, in the days of paper prosperity, he applied his science-illuminated genius to the blowing of bubbles, the hursting of which sent many a poor devil to the jail, the workhouse, or the bottom of the river, but left young Crotchet rolling in riches.

These riches he had been on the point of doubling, by a marriage with the daughter of Mr. Touchandgo, the great banker, when, one foggy morning, Mr. Touchandgo and the contents of his till were suddenly reported absent; and as the fortune which the young gentleman had intended to marry was not forthcoming, this tender affair of the heart was nipped in the bud.

Miss Touchandgo did not meet the shock of separation quite so complacently as the young gentleman; for he lost only the lady, whereas she lost a fortune as well as a lover. Some jewels, which had glittered on her beautiful person as brilliantly as the bubble of her father's wealth had done in the eyes of his gudgeons, furnished her with a small portion of paper currency; and this, added to the contents of a fairy purse of gold, which she found in her shoe on the eventful morning when Mr. Touchandgo melted into thin air, enabled her to retreat into North Wales, where she took up her lodging in a farm-house in Merionethshire, and boarded very comfortably for a trifling payment, and the additional consideration of teaching English, French, and music to the little Ap-Llymry's. In the course of this occupation, she acquired sufficient knowledge of Welsh to converse with the country people.

She climbed the mountains, and descended the dingles, with a foot which daily habit made by degrees almost as steady as a native's. She became the nymph of the scene; and if she sometimes pined in thought for her faithless Strephon, her melancholy was any thing but green and yellow; it was as genuine white and red as occupation, mountain air, thyme-fed mutton, thick cream, and fat bacon, could make it: to say nothing of an occasional glass of double X, which Ap-Llymry*, who yielded to no man west of the Wrekin in brewage, never failed to press upon her at dinner and supper. He was also earnest, and sometimes successful, in the recommendation of his mead, and most pertinacious on winter nights in enforcing a trial of the virtues of his elder wine. The young lady's personal appearance, consequently, formed a very advantageous contrast to that of her quondam lover, whose physiognomy

* Llymry. Anglicé flummery.

the intense anxieties of his bubble-blowing days, notwithstanding their triumphant result, had left blighted, sallowed, and crow's-footed, to a degree not far below that of the fallen spirit who, in the expressive language of German romance, is described as "scathed by the ineradicable traces of the thunderbolts of Heaven;" so that, contemplating their relative geological positions, the poor deserted damsel was flourishing on slate, while her rich and false young knight was pining on chalk.

Squire Crotchet had also one daughter, whom he had christened Lemma, and who, as likely to be endowed with a very ample fortune, was, of course, an object very tempting to many young soldiers of fortune, who were marching with the march of mind, in a good condition for taking castles, as far as not having a groat is a qualification for such exploits.* She was also a glittering bait to divers young squires expectant (whose fathers were too well acquainted with the occult signification of mortgage), and even to one or two sprigs of nobility, who thought that the lining of a civic purse would superinduce a very passable factitious nap upon a threadbare title. The young lady had received an expensive and complicated education; complete in all the elements of superficial display. She was thus eminently qualified to be the companion of any masculine luminary who had kept due pace with the "astounding progress" of intelligence. It must be confessed, that a man who has not kept due pace with it is not very easily found; this march being one of that "astounding" character in which it seems impossible that the rear can be behind the van. The young lady was also tolerably good-looking: north of Tweed, or in Palestine, she would probably have been a beauty; but for the valleys of the Thames, she was perhaps a little too much to the taste of Solomon, and had a nose which rather too prominently suggested the idea of the tower of Lebanon, which looked towards Damascus.

In a village in the vicinity of the castle was the vicarage of the Reverend Doctor Folliott, a gentleman endowed with a tolerable stock of learning, an interminable swallow,

* "Let him take castles who has never a groat."—POPE, *ubi supra*.

and an indefatigable pair of lungs. His pre-eminence in the latter faculty gave occasion to some etymologists to ring changes on his name, and to decide that it was derived from *Follis Optimus*, softened through an Italian medium into *Folle Ottimo*, contracted poetically into *Fol-lotto*, and elided Anglicé into *Folliott*, signifying a first-rate pair of bellows. He claimed to be descended lineally from the illustrious Gilbert Folliott, the eminent theologian, who was a bishop of London in the twelfth century, whose studies were interrupted in the dead of night by the devil; when a couple of epigrams passed between them; and the devil, of course, proved the smaller wit of the two.*

This reverend gentleman, being both learned and jolly, became by degrees an indispensable ornament to the new squire's table. Mr. Crotchet himself was eminently jolly, though by no means eminently learned. In the latter respect he took after the great majority of the sons of his father's land; had a smattering of many things, and a knowledge of none; but possessed the true northern art of making the most of his intellectual harlequin's jacket, by keeping the best patches always bright and prominent.

* The devil began: (he had caught the bishop musing on politics.)

Oh Gilbert Folliott!
Dum revolvís tot et tot,
Deus tuus est Astarot.
Oh Gilbert Folliott!
While thus you muse and plot,
Your god is Astarot.

The bishop answered:

Tace, démon: qui est deus
Sabaoth, est ille meus.
Peace, fiend; the power I own
Is Sabbaoth's Lord alone.

It must be confessed, the devil was easily posed in the twelfth century. He was a sturdier disputant in the sixteenth.

Did not the devil appear to Martin
Luther in Germany for certain?

when "the heroic student," as Mr. Coleridge calls him, was forced to proceed to "*voies de fait*." The curious may see at this day, on the wall of Luther's study, the traces of the ink-bottle which he threw at the devil's head.

CHAPTER II.

THE MARCH OF MIND.

Quoth Ralpho : nothing but the abuse
Of human learning you produce.—BUTLER.

“ God bless my soul, sir ! ” exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, bursting, one fine May morning, into the breakfast-room at Crotchet Castle, “ I am out of all patience with this march of mind. Here has my house been nearly burned down, by my cook taking it into her head to study hydrostatics, in a sixpeenny tract, published by the Steam Intellect Society, and written by a learned friend who is for doing all the world’s business as well as his own, and is equally well qualified to handle every branch of human knowledge. I have a great abomination of this learned friend ; as author, lawyer, and politician, he is *triformis*, like Hecate : and in every one of his three forms he is *bifrons*, like Janus ; the true Mr. Facing-both-ways of Vanity Fair. My cook must read his rubbish in bed ; and as might naturally be expected, she dropped suddenly fast asleep, overturned the candle, and set the curtains in a blaze. Luckily, the footman went into the room at the moment, in time to tear down the curtains and throw them into the chimney, and a pitcher of water on her nightcap extinguished her wick : she is a greasy subject, and would have burned like a short mould.”

The reverend gentleman exhaled his grievance without looking to the right or to the left ; at length, turning on his pivot, he perceived that the room was full of company, consisting of young Crotchet and some visitors whom he had brought from London. The Reverend Doctor Folliott was introduced to Mr. Mac Quedy*, the economist ; Mr. Skionar †, the transcendental poet ; Mr. Firedamp, the

* Qua-i Mac Q. E. D., son of a demonstration.

† SKIAR ONAP. *Umbræ somnium.*

meteorologist ; and Lord Bossnowl, son of the Earl of Foolincourt, and member for the borough of Roguein-grain.

The divine took his seat at the breakfast-table, and began to compose his spirits by the gentle sedative of a large cup of tea, the demulcent of a well-buttered muffin, and the tonic of a small lobster.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You are a man of taste, Mr. Crotchet. A man of taste is seen at once in the array of his breakfast-table. It is the foot of Hercules, the far-shining face of the great work ; according to Pindar's doctrine : ἀρχομένου ἔργου, πρόσωπον χιρὴ θίμεν τηλαιγέξ.* The breakfast is the πρόσωπον of the great work of the day. Chocolate, coffee, tea, cream, eggs, ham, tongue, cold fowl,—all these are good, and bespeak good knowledge in him who sets them forth : but the touchstone is fish : anchovy is the first step, prawns and shrimps the second ; and I laud him who reaches even to these : potted eel and lampreys are the third, and a fine stretch of progression ; but lobster is, indeed, matter for a May morning, and demands a rare combination of knowledge and virtue in him who sets it forth.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, and what say you to a fine ~~fresh~~ trout, hot and dry, in a napkin ? or a herring out of the water into the frying pan, on the shore of Loch Fyne ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I say every nation has some eximious virtue ; and your country is pre-eminent in the glory of fish for breakfast. We have much to learn from you in that line at any rate.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

And in many others, sir, I believe. Morals and metaphysics, politics and political economy, the way to make the most of all the modifications of smoke ; steam, gas, and paper currency ; you have all these to learn from us ; in short, all the arts and sciences. We are the modern Athenians.

* Far-shining be the face
Of a great work begun.—PIND. OL. VI.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I, for one, sir, am content to learn nothing from you but the art and science of fish for breakfast. Be content, sir, to rival the Bæotians, whose redeeming virtue was in fish, touching which point you may consult Aristophanes and his scholiast, in the passage of *Lysistrata*, ἀλλ' ἀφιλε τὰς ἐγγυλεις*, and leave the name of Athenians to those who have a sense of the beautiful, and a perception of metrical quantity.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

'Then, sir, I presume you set no value on the right principles of rent, profit, wages, and currency ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My principles, sir, in these things are, to take as much as I can get, and to pay no more than I can help. These are every man's principles, whether they be the right principles or no. There, sir, is political economy in a nutshell.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

The principles, sir, which regulate production and consumption, are independent of the will of any individual as to giving or taking, and do not lie in a nutshell by any means.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I will thank you for a leg of that capon.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

But, sir, by the by, how came your footman to be going into your cook's room ? It was very providential to be sure, but —

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, as good came of it, I shut my eyes, and asked no questions. I suppose he was going to study hydrostatics, and he found himself under the necessity of practising hydraulics.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Sir, you seem to make very light of science.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Yes, sir, such science as the learned friend deals in :

* Calonice wishes destruction to all Bæotians. *Lysistrata* answers, "*Except the eels.*" *Lysistrata*, 36.

every thing for every body, science for all, schools for all, rhetoric for all, law for all, physic for all, words for all, and sense for none. I, say, sir, law for lawyers, and cookery for cooks : and I wish the learned friend, for all his life, a cook that will pass her time in studying his works ; then every dinner he sits down to at home, he will sit on the stool of repentance.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

Now really that would be too severe : my cook should read nothing but Ude.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir ! let Ude and the learned friend sing fowls together ; let both avaunt from my kitchen. Θύρας δ' ἐπιθεσθε βιβλίαις. * Ude says an elegant supper may be given with sandwiches. *Horresco referens*. An elegant supper ! *Dè meliora piis*. No Ude for me. Conviviality went out with punch and suppers. I cherish their memory. I sup when I can, but not upon sandwiches. To offer me a sandwich, when I am looking for a supper, is to add insult to injury. Let the learned friend, and the modern Athenians, sup upon sandwiches.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, sir ; the modern Athenians know better than that. A literary supper in sweet Edinbroo' would cure you of the prejudice you seem to cherish against us.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, well ; there is cogency in a good supper ; a good supper, in these degenerate days, bespeaks a good man ; but much more is wanted to make up an Athenian. Athenians, indeed ! where is your theatre ? who among you has written a comedy ? where is your attic salt ? which of you can tell who was Jupiter's great grandfather ? or what metres will successively remain, if you take off the three first syllables, one by one, from a pure antispastic acatalectic tetrameter ? Now, sir, there are three questions for you ; theatrical, mythological, and metrical ;

* "Shut the doors against the profane." ORPHICA, *passim*.

to every one of which an Athenian would give an answer that would lay me prostrate in my own nothingness.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, as to your metre and your mythology, they may e'en wait a wee. For your comedy, there is the Gentle Shepherd of the divine Allan Ramsay.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

The Gentle Shepherd! It is just as much a comedy as the book of Job.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, if none of us have written a comedy, I cannot see that it is any such great matter, any more than I can conjecture what business a man can have at this time of day with Jupiter's great grandfather.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

The great business is, sir, that you call yourselves Athenians, while you know nothing that the Athenians thought worth knowing, and dare not show your noses before the civilised world in the practice of any one art in which they were excellent. Modern Athens, sir! the assumption is a personal affront to every man who has a Sophocles in his library. I will thank you for an anchovy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Metaphysics, sir; metaphysics. Logic and moral philosophy. There we are at home. The Athenians only sought the way, and we have found it; and to all this we have added political economy, the science of sciences.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

A hyperbarbarous technology, that no Athenian ear could have borne. Premises assumed without evidence, or in spite of it; and conclusions drawn from them so logically, that they must necessarily be erroneous.

MR. SKIONAR.

I cannot agree with you, Mr. Mac Quedy, that you have found the true road of metaphysics, which the Athenians only sought. The Germans have found it, sir: the sublime Kant, and his disciples.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I have read the sublime Kant, sir, with an anxious desire to understand him ; and I confess I have not succeeded.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He wants the two great requisites of head and tail.

MR. SKIONAR.

Transcendentalism is the philosophy of intuition, the development of universal convictions ; truths which are inherent in the organisation of mind, which cannot be obliterated, though they may be obscured, by superstitious prejudice on the one hand, and by the Aristotelian logic on the other.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, I have no notion of logic obscuring a question.

MR. SKIONAR.

There is only one true logic, which is the transcendental ; and this can prove only the one true philosophy, which is also the transcendental. The logic of your modern Athens can prove every thing equally ; and that is, in my opinion, tantamount to proving nothing at all.

MR. CROCHET.

The sentimental against the rational, the intuitive against the inductive, the ornamental against the useful, the intense against the tranquil, the romantic against the classical ; these are great and interesting controversies, which I should like, before I die, to see satisfactorily settled.

MR. FRIEDAMP.

There is another great question, greater than all these, seeing that it is necessary to be alive in order to settle any question ; and this is the question of water against human woe. Wherever there is water, there is *malaria*, and wherever there is *malaria*, there are the elements of death. The great object of a wise man should be to live on a gravelly hill, without so much as a duck-pond within ten miles of him, eschewing cisterns and water-butts, and

taking care that there be no gravel-pits for lodging the rain. The sun sucks up infection from water, wherever it exists on the face of the earth.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, you have for you the authority of the ancient mystagogue, who said : "Εστιν ὕδωρ ψυχῇ θάνατος.* For my part I care not a rush (or any other aquatic and inesculent vegetable) who or what sucks up either the water or the infection. I think the proximity of wine a matter of much more importance than the longinquity of water. You are here within a quarter of a mile of the Thames ; but in the cellar of my friend, Mr. Crotchet, there is the talismanic antidote of a thousand dozen of old wine ; a beautiful spectacle, I assure you, and a model of arrangement.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Sir, I feel the malignant influence of the river in every part of my system. Nothing but my great friendship for Mr. Crotchet would have brought me so nearly within the jaws of the lion.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

After dinner, sir, after dinner, I will meet you on this question. I shall then be armed for the strife. You may fight like Hercules against Achelons, but I shall flourish the Bacchic thyrsus, which changed rivers into wine : as Nonnus sweetly sings, Οἶνω κυματόεντι μέλας κελάρυζεν Ὑδάσπη.†

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

I hope, Mr. Firedamp, you will let your friendship carry you a little closer into the jaws of the lion. I am fitting up a flotilla of pleasure boats, with spacious cabins, and a good cellar, to carry a choice philosophical party up the Thames and Severn, into the Ellesmere canal, where we shall be among the mountains of North Wales ; which we may climb or not, as we think proper ; but we will, at any rate, keep our floating hotel well provisioned

* Literally, which is sufficient for the present purpose, " Water is death to the soul." OUPHICA : Fr. XLX.

† Hydaspes gurgled, dark with billowy wine. *Dionysiaca*, XXV. 280.

and we will try to settle all the questions over which a shadow of doubt yet hangs in the world of philosophy.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Out of my great friendship for you, I will certainly go ; but I do not expect to survive the experiment.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

*Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quæ vehat Argo Delectos Heroes.** I will be of the party, though I must hire an officiating curate, and deprive poor Mrs. Folliott, for several weeks, of the pleasure of combing my wig.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

I hope, if I am to be of the party, our ship is not to be the ship of fools : He ! He !

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

If you are one of the party, sir, it most assuredly will not : Ha ! Ha !

LORD BOSSNOWL.

Pray sir, what do you mean by Ha ! Ha ! ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Precisely, sir, what you mean by He ! He !

MR. MAC QUEDY.

You need not dispute about terms ; they are two modes of expressing merriment, with or without reason ; reason being in no way essential to mirth. No man should ask another why he laughs, or at what, seeing that he does not always know, and that, if he does, he is not a responsible agent. Laughter is an involuntary action of certain muscles, developed in the human species by the progress of civilisation. The savage never laughs.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir, he has nothing to laugh at. Give him Modern Athens, the "learned friend," and the Steam Intellect Society. They will develope his muscles.

* "Another Tiphys on the waves shall float,
And chosen heroes freight his glorious boat."
Virg. *Ecl.* IV.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROMAN CAMP.

He loved her more then seven yere,
 Yet was he of her love never the nere;
 He was not ryche of golde and fe,
 A gentyll man forsoth was he.

The Squyr of Low Degre.

THE Reverend Doctor Polliott having promised to return to dinner, walked back to his vicarage, meditating whether he should pass the morning in writing his next sermon, or in angling for trout, and had nearly decided in favour of the latter proposition, repeating to himself, with great uncertainty, the lines of Chaucer : —

And as for me, though that I can but lite,
 On bokis for to read I me delite,
 And to 'hem yeve I faith and full credence,
 And in mine herte have 'hem in reverence,
 So hertily, that there is gamé none,
 That fro my bokis makith me to gone,
 But it be seldome, on the holic daie;
 Save certainly whan that the month of Maie
 Is comin, and I here the foulis sing,
 And that the flouris ginnin for to spring,
 Farewell my boke and my devocion :

when his attention was attracted by a young gentleman who was sitting on a camp stool with a portfolio on his knee, taking a sketch of the Roman Camp, which, as has been already said, was within the enclosed domain of Mr. Crotchet. The young stranger, who had climbed over the fence, espying the portly divine, rose up, and hoped that he was not trespassing. "By no means, sir," said the divine; "all the arts and sciences are welcome here: music, painting, and poetry; hydrostatics, and political economy; metcorology, transcendentalism, and fish for breakfast."

THE STRANGER.

A pleasant association, sir, and a liberal and discriminating hospitality. This is an old British camp, I believe, sir?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Roman, sir ; Roman : undeniably Roman. The vallum is past controversy. It was not a camp, sir, a *castrum*, but a *castellum*, a little camp, or watch-station, to which was attached, on the peak of the adjacent hill, a beacon for transmitting alarms. You will find such here and there, all along the range of chalk hills, which traverses the country from north-east to south-west, and along the base of which runs the ancient Ikenild road, whereof you may desery a portion in that long strait white line.

THE STRANGER.

I beg your pardon, sir : do I understand this place to be your property ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

It is not mine, sir : the more is the pity ; yet is it so far well, that the owner is my good friend, and a highly respectable gentleman.

THE STRANGER.

Good and respectable, sir, I take it, mean rich ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That is their meaning, sir.

THE STRANGER.

I understand the owner to be a Mr. Crotchct. He has a handsome daughter, I am told.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He has, sir. Her eyes are like the fishpools of Heshbon, by the gate of Bethrabbim ; and she is to have a handsome fortune, to which divers disinterested gentlemen are paying their addresses. Perhaps you design to be one of them.

THE STRANGER.

No, sir ; I beg pardon if my questions seem impertinent ; I have no such design. There is a son, too, I believe, sir, a great and successful blower of bubbles.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

A hero, sir, in his line. Never did angler in September hook more gudgeons.

THE STRANGER.

To say the truth, two very amiable young people, with whom I have some little acquaintance, Lord Bossnowl, and his sister, Lady Clarinda, are reported to be on the point of concluding a double marriage with Miss Crotchet and her brother, by way of putting a new varnish on old nobility. Lord Foolincourt, their father, is terribly poor for a lord who owns a borough.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, the Crotchets have plenty of money, and the old gentleman's weak point is a hankering after high blood. I saw your acquaintance Lord Bossnowl this morning; but I did not see his sister. She may be there, nevertheless, and doing fashionable justice to this fine May morning, by lying in bed till noon.

THE STRANGER.

Young Mr. Crotchet, sir, has been, like his father, the architect of his own fortune, has he not? An illustrious example of the reward of honesty and industry?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

As to honesty, sir, he made his fortune in the city of London; and if that commodity be of any value there, you will find it in the price current. I believe it is below par, like the shares of young Crotchet's fifty companies. But his progress has not been exactly like his father's: it has been more rapid, and he started with more advantages. He began with a fine capital from his father. The old gentleman divided his fortune into three not exactly equal portions: one for himself, one for his daughter, and one for his son, which he handed over to him, saying, "Take it once for all, and make the most of it; if you lose it where I won it, not another stiver do you get from me during my life." But, sir, young Crotchet doubled, and trebled, and quadrupled it, and is, as you say, a striking example of the reward of industry; not that I think his labour has been so great as his luck.

THE STRANGER.

But, sir, is all this solid? is there no danger of reaction?

no day of reckoning, to cut down in an hour prosperity that has grown up like a mushroom?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Nay, sir, I know not. I do not pry into these matters. I am, for my own part, very well satisfied with the young gentleman. Let those who are not so look to themselves. It is quite enough for me that he came down last night from London, and that he had the good sense to bring with him a basket of lobsters. Sir, I wish you a good morning.

The stranger, having returned the reverend gentleman's good morning, resumed his sketch, and was intently employed on it when Mr. Crotchet made his appearance, with Mr. Mac Quedy and Mr. Skionar, whom he was escorting round his grounds, according to his custom with new visitors; the principal pleasure of possessing an extensive domain being that of showing it to other people. Mr. Mac Quedy, according also to the laudable custom of his countrymen, had been appraising every thing that fell under his observation; but, on arriving at the Roman camp, of which the value was purely imaginary, he contented himself with exclaiming, "Eh! this is just a curiosity, and very pleasant to sit in on a summer day."

MR. SKIONAR.

And call up the days of old, when the Roman eagle spread its wings in the place of that beechen foliage. It gives a fine idea of duration, to think that that fine old tree must have sprung from the earth ages after this camp was formed.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

How old, think you, may the tree be?

MR. CROTCHET.

I have records which show it to be three hundred years old.

MR. MAC QUEDY,

That is a great age for a beech in good condition. But you see the camp is some fifteen hundred years, or so, older; and three times six being eighteen, I think you get

a clearer idea of duration out of the simple arithmetic than out of your eagle and foliage.

MR. SKIONAR.

That is a very unpoetical, if not unphilosophical, mode of viewing antiquities. Your philosophy is too literal for our imperfect vision. We cannot look directly into the nature of things ; we can only catch glimpses of the mighty shadow in the camera obscura of transcendental intelligence. These six and eighteen are only words to which we give conventional meanings. We can reason, but we cannot feel, by help of them. The tree and the eagle, contemplated in the ideality of space and time, become subjective realities, that rise up as landmarks in the mystery of the past.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, if you understand that, I wish you joy. But I must be excused for holding that my proposition, three times six are eighteen, is more intelligible than yours. A worthy friend of mine, who is a sort of amateur in philosophy, criticism, politics, and a wee bit of many things more, says, "Men never begin to study antiquities till they are saturated with civilisation."*

MR. SKIONAR.

What is civilisation ?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

It is just respect for property : a state in which no man takes wrongfully what belongs to another, is a perfectly civilised state.

MR. SKIONAR.

Your friend's antiquaries must have lived in El Dorado, to have had an opportunity of being saturated with such a state.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

It is a question of degree. There is more respect for property here than in Angola.

MR. SKIONAR.

That depends on the light in which things are viewed.

* Edinburgh Review, somewhere.

Mr. Crotchet was rubbing his hands, in hopes of a fine discussion, when they came round to the side of the camp where the picturesque gentleman was sketching. The stranger was rising up, when Mr. Crotchet begged him not to disturb himself, and presently walked away with his two guests.

Shortly after Miss Crotchet and Lady Clarinda, who had breakfasted by themselves, made their appearance at the same spot, hanging each on an arm of Lord Bossnowl, who very much preferred their company to that of the philosophers, though he would have preferred the company of the latter, or any company, to his own. He thought it very singular that so agreeable a person as he held himself to be to others, should be so exceedingly tiresome to himself: he did not attempt to investigate the cause of this phenomenon, but was contented with acting on his knowledge of the fact, and giving himself as little of his own private society as possible.

The stranger rose as they approached, and was immediately recognised by the Bossnowls as an old acquaintance, and saluted with the exclamation of "Captain Fitzchrome!" The interchange of salutation between Lady Clarinda and the Captain was accompanied with an amiable confusion on both sides, in which the observant eyes of Miss Crotchet seemed to read the recollection of an affair of the heart.

Lord Bossnowl was either unconscious of any such affair, or indifferent to its existence. He introduced the Captain very cordially to Miss Crotchet, and the young lady invited him, as the friend of their guests, to partake of her father's hospitality; an offer which was readily accepted.

The Captain took his portfolio under his right arm, his camp stool in his right hand, offered his left arm to Lady Clarinda, and followed at a reasonable distance behind Miss Crotchet and Lord Bossnowl, contriving, in the most natural manner possible, to drop more and more into the rear.

LADY CLARINDA.

I am glad to see you can make yourself so happy with drawing old trees and mounds of grass.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Happy, Lady Clarinda ! oh, no ! - How can I be happy when I see the idol of my heart about to be sacrificed on the shrine of Mammon ?

LADY CLARINDA.

Do you know, though Mammon has a sort of ill name, I really think he is a very popular character ; there must be at the bottom something amiable about him. He is certainly one of those pleasant creatures whom every body abuses, but without whom no evening party is endurable. I dare say, love in a cottage is very pleasant ; but then it positively must be a cottage ornée : but would not the same love be a great deal safer in a castle, even if Mammon furnished the fortification ?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Oh, Lady Clarinda ! there is a heartlessness in that language that chills me to the soul.

LADY CLARINDA.

Heartlessness ! No : my heart is on my lips. I speak just what I think. You used to like it, and say it was as delightful as it was rare.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

True, but you did not then talk as you do now, of love in a castle.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, but only consider : a dun is a horridly vulgar creature ; it is a creature I cannot endure the thought of : and a cottage lets him in so easily. Now a castle keeps him at bay. You are a half-pay officer, and are at leisure to command the garrison : but where is the castle ? and who is to furnish the commissariat ?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Is it come to this, that you make a jest of my poverty ? Yet is my poverty only comparative. Many decent families are maintained on smaller means.

LADY CLARINDA.

Decent families : aye, decent is the distinction from re-

spectable. Respectable means rich, and decent means poor. I should die if I heard my family called decent. And then your decent family always lives in a snug little place: I hate a little place; I like large rooms and large looking-glasses, and large parties, and a fine large butler, with a tinge of smooth red in his face; an outward and visible sign that the family he serves is respectable; if not noble, highly respectable.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I cannot believe that you say all this in earnest. No man is less disposed than I am to deny the importance of the substantial comforts of life. I once flattered myself that in our estimate of these things we were nearly of a mind.

LADY CLARINDA.

Do you know, I think an opera-box a very substantial comfort, and a carriage. You will tell me that many decent people walk arm in arm through the snow, and sit in clogs and bonnets in the pit at the English theatre. No doubt it is very pleasant to those who are used to it; but it is not to my taste.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You always delighted in trying to provoke me; but I cannot believe that you have not a heart.

LADY CLARINDA.

You do not like to believe that I have a heart, you mean. You wish to think I have lost it, and you know to whom; and when I tell you that it is still safe in my own keeping, and that I do not mean to give it away, the unreasonable creature grows angry.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Angry! far from it: I am perfectly cool.

LADY CLARINDA.

Why you are pursing your brows, biting your lips, and lifting up your foot as if you would stamp it into the earth. I must say anger becomes you; you would make a charming Hotspur. Your every-day-dining-out face is rather insipid: but I assure you my heart is in danger

when you are in the heroics. It is so rare, too, in these days of smooth manners, to see any thing like natural expression in a man's face. There is one set form for every man's face in female society; a sort of serious comedy, walking gentleman's face: but the moment the creature falls in love, he begins to give himself airs, and plays off all the varieties of his physiognomy, from the Master Slender to the Petruchio; and then he is actually very amusing.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Well, Lady Clarinda, I will not be angry, amusing as it may be to you: I listen more in sorrow than in anger. I half believe you in earnest, and mourn as over a fallen angel.

LADY CLARINDA.

What, because I have made up my mind not to give away my heart when I can sell it? I will introduce you to my new acquaintance, Mr. Mac Quedy: he will talk to you by the hour about exchangeable value, and show you that no rational being will part with any thing, except to the highest bidder.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Now, I am sure you are not in earnest. You cannot adopt such sentiments in their naked deformity.

LADY CLARINDA.

Naked deformity: why Mr. Mac Quedy will prove to you that they are the cream of the most refined philosophy. You live a very pleasant life as a bachelor, roving about the country with your portfolio under your arm. I am not fit to be a poor man's wife. I cannot take any kind of trouble, or do any one thing that is of any use. Many decent families roast a bit of mutton on a string; but if I displease my father I shall not have as much as will buy the string, to say nothing of the meat; and the bare idea of such cookery gives me the horrors.

By this time they were near the castle, and met Miss Crotchet and her companion, who had turned back to meet them. Captain Fitzchrome was shortly after heartily welcomed by Mr. Crotchet, and the party separated to

dress for dinner, the captain being by no means in an enviable state of mind, and full of misgivings as to the extent of belief that he was bound to accord to the words of the lady of his heart.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTY.

En quoi cognoissez-vous la folie antique? En quoi cognoissez-vous la sagesse présente? — RABELAIS.

“ If I were sketching a bandit who had just shot his last pursuer, having outrun all the rest, that is the very face I would give him,” soliloquised the captain, as he studied the features of his rival in the drawing-room, during the miserable half-hour before dinner, when dulness reigns predominant over the expectant company, especially when they are waiting for some one last comer, whom they all heartily curse in their hearts, and whom, nevertheless, or indeed therefore-the-more, they welcome as a sinner, more heartily than all the just persons who had been punctual to their engagement. Some new visitors had arrived in the morning, and, as the company dropped in one by one, the captain anxiously watched the unclosing door for the form of his beloved; but she was the last to make her appearance, and on her entry gave him a malicious glance, which he construed into a telegraphic communication that she had stayed away to torment him. Young Crotehet escorted her with marked attention to the upper end of the drawing-room, where a great portion of the company was congregated around Miss Crotehet. These being the only ladies in the company, it was evident that old Mr. Crotehet would give his arm to Lady Clarinda, an arrangement with which the captain could not interfere. He therefore took his station near the door, studying his rival from a distance, and determined to take

advantage of his present position, to secure the seat next to his charmer. He was meditating on the best mode of operation for securing this important post with due regard to *bienséance*, when he was twitched by the button by Mr. Mac Quedy, who said to him: "Lady Clarinda tells me, sir, that you are anxious to talk with me on the subject of exchangeable value, from which I infer that you have studied political economy; and as a great deal depends on the definition of value, I shall be glad to set you right on that point." — "I am much obliged to you, sir," said the captain, and was about to express his utter disqualification for the proposed instruction, when Mr. Skionar walked up, and said: "Lady Clarinda informs me that you wish to talk over with me the question of subjective reality. I am delighted to fall in with a gentleman who duly appreciates the transcendental philosophy." — "Lady Clarinda is too good," said the captain; and was about to protest that he had never heard the word transcendental before, when the butler announced dinner. Mr. Crotchet led the way with Lady Clarinda: Lord Bossnowl followed with Miss Crotchet: the economist and transcendentalist pinned in the captain, and held him, one by each arm, as he impatiently descended the stairs in the rear of several others of the company, whom they had forced him to let pass; but the moment he entered the dining-room he broke loose from them, and at the expense of a little *brusquerie*, secured his position.

"Well, captain," said Lady Clarinda, "I perceive you can still manœuvre."

"What could possess you," said the captain, "to send two unendurable and inconceivable borks, to intercept me with rubbish about which I neither know nor care any more than the man in the moon?"

"Perhaps," said Lady Clarinda, "I saw your design, and wished to put your generalship to the test. But do not contradict any thing I have said about you, and see if the learned will find you out."

"There is fine music, as Rabelais observes, in the *éliquetis d'assiettes*, a refreshing shade in the *ombre de salle à manger*, and an elegant fragrance in the *fumée de rôti*,"

said a voice at the captain's elbow. The captain turning round, recognised his clerical friend of the morning, who knew him again immediately, and said he was extremely glad to meet him there ; more especially as Lady Clarinda had assured him that he was an enthusiastic lover of Greek poetry.

" Lady Clarinda," said the captain, " is a very pleasant young lady."

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

So she is, sir : and I understand she has all the wit of the family to herself, whatever that *totum* may be. But a glass of wine after soup is, as the French say, the *verre de santé*. The current of opinion sets in favour of Hock : but I am for Madeira ; I do not fancy Hock till I have laid a substratum of Madeira. Will you join me ?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

With pleasure.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Here is a very fine salmon before me : and May is the very *point nommé* to have salmon in perfection. There is a fine turbot close by, and there is much to be said in his behalf ; but salmon in May is the king of fish.

MR. CROTCHET.

That salmon before you, doctor, was caught in the Thames this morning.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Παπαπᾶ ! Rarity of rarities ! A Thames salmon caught this morning. Now, Mr. Mac Quedy, even in fish your Modern Athens must yield. *Cedite Græci*.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh ! sir, on its own ground, your Thames salmon has two virtues over all others : first, that it is fresh ; and, second, that it is rare ; for I understand you do not take half a dozen in a year.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

In some years, sir, not one. Mud, filth, gas dregs, lock-wiers, and the march of mind, developed in the form of

poaching, have ruined the fishery. But when we do catch a salmon, happy the man to whom he falls.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I confess, sir, this is excellent ; but I cannot see why it should be better than a Tweed salmon at Kelso.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I will take a glass of Hock with you.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

With all my heart, sir. There are several varieties of the salmon genus : but the common salmon, the *salmo salar*, is only one species, one and the same every where, just like the human mind. Locality and education make all the difference.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Education ! Well, sir, I have no doubt schools for all are just as fit for the species *salmo salar* as for the genus *homo*. But you must allow, that the specimen before us has finished his education in a manner that does honour to his college. However, I doubt that the *salmo salar* is only one species, that is to say, precisely alike in all localities. I hold that every river has its own breed, with essential differences ; in flavour especially. And as for the human mind, I deny that it is the same in all men. I hold that there is every variety of natural capacity from the idiot to Newton and Shakspeare ; the mass of mankind, midway between these extremes, being blockheads of different degrees ; education leaving them pretty nearly as it found them, with this single difference, that it gives a fixed direction to their stupidity, a sort of incurable wry neck to the thing they call their understanding. So one nose points always east, and another always west, and each is ready to swear that it points due north.

MR. CROTCHET.

If that be the point of truth, very few intellectual noses point due north.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Only those that point to the Modern Athens.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Where all native noses point southward.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh, sir, northward for wisdom, and southward for profit.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Champagne, doctor?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Most willingly. But you will permit my drinking it while it sparkles. I hold it a heresy to let it deaden in my hand, while the glass of my *compotutor* is being filled on the opposite side of the table. By the bye, captain, you remember a passage in *Atheniens*, where he cites Menander on the subject of fish-sauce: *ὀψάριον ἐπὶ ἰχθύος*. (*The captain was aghast for an answer that would satisfy both his neighbours, when he was relieved by the divine continuing.*) The science of fish sauce, Mr. Mac Quedy, is by no means brought to perfection; a fine field of discovery still lies open in that line.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, sir, beyond lobster sauce, I take it, ye cannot go.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

In their line, I grant you, oyster and lobster sauce are the pillars of Hercules. But I speak of the cruet sauces, where the quintessence of the sapid is condensed in a phial. I can taste in my mind's palate a combination, which, if I could give it reality, I would christen with the name of my college, and hand it down to posterity as a seat of learning indeed.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, I wish you success, but I cannot let slip the question we started just now. I say, cutting off idiots, who have no minds at all, all minds are by nature alike. Education (which begins from their birth) makes them what they are.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir, it makes their tendencies, not their power.

Cæsar would have been the first wrestler on the village common. Education might have made him a Nadir Shah ; it might also have made him a Washington ; it could not have made him a merry-andrew, for our newspapers to extol as a model of eloquence.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Now, sir, I think education would have made him just any thing, and fit for any station, from the throne to the stocks ; saint or sinner, aristocrat or democrat, judge, counsel, or prisoner at the bar.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I will thank you for a slice of lamb, with lemon and pepper. Before I proceed with this discussion,—*Vin de Grave*, Mr. Skionar,—I must interpose one remark. There is a set of persons in your city, Mr. Mac Quedy, who concoct every three or four months a thing which they call a review : a sort of sugar-plum manufacturers to the Whig aristocracy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I cannot tell, sir, exactly, what you mean by that ; but I hope you will speak of those gentlemen with respect, seeing that I am one of them.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I must drown my inadvertence in a glass of *Sau-terne* with you. There is a set of gentlemen in your city —

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Not in our city, exactly ; neither are they a set. There is an editor, who forages for articles in all quarters, from John O'Groat's house to the Land's End. It is not a board, or a society : it is a mere intellectual bazaar, where A., B., and C. bring their wares to market.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, these gentlemen among them, the present company excepted, have practised as much dishonesty as, in any other department than literature, would have brought the practitioner under the cognisance of the police. In politics, they have run with the hare and hunted with the

hound. In criticism they have, knowingly and unblushingly, given false characters, both for good and for evil: sticking at no art of misrepresentation, to clear out of the field of literature all who stood in the way of the interests of their own clique. They have never allowed their own profound ignorance of any thing (Greek, for instance) to throw even an air of hesitation into their oracular decision on the matter. They set an example of profligate contempt for truth, of which the success was in proportion to the effrontery; and when their prosperity had filled the market with competitors, they cried out against their own reflected sin, as if they had never committed it, or were entitled to a monopoly of it. The latter, I rather think, was what they wanted.

MR. CROTCHET.

Hermitage, doctor?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Nothing better, sir. The father who first chose the solitude of that vineyard, knew well how to cultivate his spirit in retirement. Now, Mr. Mac Quedy, Achilles was distinguished above all the Greeks for his inflexible love of truth: could education have made Achilles one of your reviewers?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No doubt of it, even if your character of them were true to the letter

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

And I say, sir—chicken and asparagus—Titan had made him of better clay.* I hold with Pindar: “All that is most excellent is so by nature.” *Τὸ δὲ φυχὴν κράτιστον ἄπαν.*† Education can give purposes, but not powers; and whatever purposes had been given him, he would have gone straight forward to them; straight forward, Mr. Mac Quedy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No, sir, education makes the man, powers, purposes, and all.

* Juv. xiv. 35.

† Ol. ix. 152.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

There is the point, sir, on which we join issue.

Several others of the company now chimed in with their opinions, which gave the divine an opportunity to degustate one or two side dishes, and to take a glass of wine with each of the young ladies.

CHAPTER V.

CHARACTERS.

Ay imputé a honte plus que mediocre être vu spectateur ocieux de tant vaillans, disertz, et chevalereux personnages. — RABELAIS.

LADY CLARINDA (*to the Captain*).

I DECLARE the creature has been listening to all this rigmarole, instead of attending to me. Do you ever expect forgiveness? But now that they are all talking together, and you cannot make out a word they say, nor they hear a word that we say, I will describe the company to you. First, there is the old gentleman on my left hand, at the head of the table, who is now leaning the other way to talk to my brother. He is a good tempered, half-informed person, very unreasonably fond of reasoning, and of reasoning people; people that talk nonsense logically: he is fond of disputation himself, when there are only one or two, but seldom does more than listen in a large company of *illuminés*. He made a great fortune in the city, and has the comfort of a good conscience. He is very hospitable, and is generous in dinners; though nothing would induce him to give sixpence to the poor, because he holds that all misfortune is from imprudence, that none but the rich ought to marry, and that all ought to thrive by honest industry, as he did. He is ambitious of founding a family, and of allying himself with nobility; and is thus as willing as other grown children, to throw away thousands for a gewgaw, though he would not part with a penny for charity.

Next to him is my brother, whom you know as well as I do. He has finished his education with credit, and as he never ventures to oppose me in any thing, I have no doubt he is very sensible. He has good manners, is a model of dress, and is reckoned ornamental in all societies. Next to him is Miss Crotchet, my sister-in-law that is to be. You see she is rather pretty, and very genteel. She is tolerably accomplished, has her table always covered with new novels, thinks Mr. Mac Quedy an oracle, and is extremely desirous to be called "my lady." Next to her is Mr. Firedamp, a very absurd person, who thinks that water is the evil principle. Next to him is Mr. Eavesdrop, a man who, by dint of a certain something like smartness, has got into good society. He is a sort of bookseller's tool, and coins all his acquaintance in reminiscences and sketches of character. I am very shy of him, for fear he should print me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

If he print you in your own likeness, which is that of an angel, you need not fear him. If he print you in any other, I will cut his throat. But proceed—

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to him is Mr. Henbane, the toxicologist, I think he calls himself. He has passed half his life in studying poisons and antidotes. The first thing he did on his arrival here, was to kill the cat; and while Miss Crotchet was crying over her, he brought her to life again. I am more shy of him than the other.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

They are two very dangerous fellows, and I shall take care to keep them both at a respectful distance. Let us hope that Eavesdrop will sketch off Henbane, and that Henbane will poison him for his trouble.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, next to him sits Mr. Mac Quedy, the Modern Athenian, who lays down the law about every thing, and therefore may be taken to understand every thing. He turns all the affairs of this world into questions of buying and selling. He is the Spirit of the Frozen Ocean to every thing like romance and sentiment. He condenses their

volume of steam into a drop of cold water in a moment. He has satisfied me that I am a commodity in the market, and that I ought to set myself at a high price. So you see he who would have me must bid for me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I shall discuss that point with Mr. Mac Quedy.

LADY CLARINDA.

Not a word for your life. Our flirtation is our own secret. Let it remain so.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Flirtation, Clarinda! Is that all that the most ardent ——

LADY CLARINDA.

Now, don't be rhapsodical here. Next to Mr. Mac Quedy is Mr. Skionar, a sort of poetical philosopher, a curious compound of the intense and the mystical. He abominates all the ideas of Mr. Mac Quedy, and settles every thing by sentiment and intuition.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Then, I say, he is the wiser man.

LADY CLARINDA.

They are two oddities; but a little of them is amusing, and I like to hear them dispute. So you see I am in training for a philosopher myself.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Any philosophy, for heaven's sake, but the pound-shilling-and-pence philosophy of Mr. Mac Quedy.

LADY CLARINDA.

Why, they say that even Mr. Skionar, though he is a great dreamer, always dreams with his eyes open, or with one eye at any rate, which is an eye to his gain: but I believe that in this respect the poor man has got an ill name by keeping bad company. He has two dear friends, Mr. Wilful Wontsee, and Mr. Rumblesack Shantsee, poets of some note, who used to see visions of Utopia, and pure republics beyond the Western deep: but finding that these 1 Dorados brought them no revenue, they turned their

vision-seeing faculty into the more profitable channel of espying all sorts of virtues in the high and the mighty, who were able and willing to pay for the discovery.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I do not fancy these virtue-spyers.

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to Mr. Skionar, sits Mr. Chainmail, a good-looking young gentleman, as you see, with very antiquated tastes. He is fond of old poetry, and is something of a poet himself. He is deep in monkish literature, and holds that the best state of society was that of the twelfth century, when nothing was going forward but fighting, feasting, and praying, which he says are the three great purposes for which man was made. He laments bitterly over the inventions of gunpowder, steam, and gas, which he says have ruined the world. He lives within two or three miles, and has a large hall, adorned with rusty pikes, shields, helmets, swords, and tattered banners, and furnished with yew-tree chairs, and two long, old, worm-eaten oak tables, where he dines with all his household, after the fashion of his favourite age. He wants us all to dine with him, and I believe we shall go.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

That will be something new at any rate.

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to him is Mr. Toogood, the co-operationist, who will have neither fighting nor praying, ; but wants to parcel out the world into squares like a chess-board, with a community on each, raising every thing for one another, with a great steam-engine to serve them in common for tailor and hosier, kitchen and cook.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

He is the strangest of the set, so far.

LADY CLARINDA.

This brings us to the bottom of the table, where sits my humble servant, Mr. Crotchet the younger. I ought not to describe him.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I entreat you do.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, I really have very little to say in his favour.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I do not wish to hear any thing in his favour ; and I rejoice to hear you say so, because ——

LADY CLARINDA.

Do not flatter yourself. If I take him, it will be to please my father, and to have a town and country-house, and plenty of servants, and a carriage and an opera-box, and make some of my acquaintance who have married for love, or for rank, or for any thing but money, die for envy of my jewels. You do not think I would take him for himself. Why he is very smooth and spruce, as far as his dress goes ; but as to his face, he looks as if he had tumbled headlong into a volcano, and been thrown up again among the cinders.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I cannot believe, that, speaking thus of him, you mean to take him at all.

LADY CLARINDA.

Oh ! I am out of my teens. I have been very much in love ; but now I am come to years of discretion, and must think, like other people, of settling myself advantageously. He was in love with a banker's daughter, and cast her off on her father's bankruptcy, and the poor girl has gone to hide herself in some wild place.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

She must have a strange taste, if she pines for the loss of him.

LADY CLARINDA.

They say he was good-looking, till his bubble-schemes, as they call them, stamped him with the physiognomy of a desperate gambler. I suspect he has still a *penchant* towards his first flame. If he takes me, it will be for my rank and connection, and the second seat of the borough of Rogueingrain. So we shall meet on equal terms, and shall

enjoy all the blessedness of expecting nothing from each other.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You can expect no security with such an adventurer.

LADY CLARINDA.

I shall have the security of a good settlement, and then if *andare al diavolo* be his destiny, he may go, you know, by himself. He is almost always dreaming and *distract*. It is very likely that some great reverse is in store for him : but that will not concern me, you perceive.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You torture me, Clarinda, with the bare possibility.

LADY CLARINDA.

Hush ! Here is music to soothe your troubled spirit. Next to him, on this side, sits the dilettante composer, Mr. Trillo ; they say his name was O'Trill, and he has taken the O from the beginning, and put it at the end. I do not know how this may be. He plays well on the violoncello, and better on the piano : sings agreeably ; has a talent at verse-making, and improvises a song with some felicity. He is very agreeable company in the evening, with his instruments and music-books. He maintains that the sole end of all enlightened society is to get up a good opera, and laments that wealth, genius, and energy, are squandered upon other pursuits, to the neglect of this one great matter.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

That is a very pleasant fancy at any rate.

LADY CLARINDA.

I assure you he has a great deal to say for it. Well, next to him again, is Dr. Morbific, who has been all over the world to prove that there is no such thing as contagion ; and has inoculated himself with plague, yellow fever, and every variety of pestilence, and is still alive to tell the story. I am very shy of him, too ; for I look on him as a walking phial of wrath, corked full of all infections, and not to be touched without extreme hazard.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

This is the strangest fellow of all.

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to him sits Mr. Philpot*, the geographer, who thinks of nothing but the heads and tails of rivers, and lays down the streams of Terra Incognita as accurately as if he had been there. He is a person of pleasant fancy, and makes a sort of fairy land of every country he touches, from the Frozen Ocean to the Deserts of Zahara.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

How does he settle matters with Mr. Firedamp?

LADY CLARINDA.

You see Mr. Firedamp has got as far as possible out of his way. Next to him is Sir Simon Steeltrap, of Steeltrap Lodge, Member for Crouching-Curtown, Justice of Peace for the county, and Lord of the United Manors of Spring-gun and Treadmill; a great preserver of game and public morals. By administering the laws which he assists in making, he disposes, at his pleasure, of the land and its live stock, including all the two-legged varieties, with and without feathers, in a circumference of several miles round Steeltrap Lodge. He has enclosed commons and woodlands; abolished cottage-gardens; taken the village cricket-ground into his own park, out of pure regard to the sanctity of Sunday; shut up footpaths and alehouses, (all but those which belong to his electioneering friend, Mr. Quassia, the brewer;) put down fairs and fiddlers; committed many poachers; shot a few; convicted one third of the peasantry; suspected the rest; and passed nearly the whole of them through a wholesome course of prison discipline, which has finished their education at the expense of the county.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

He is somewhat out of his element here: among such a diversity of opinions he will hear some he will not like.

LADY CLARINDA.

It was rather ill-judged in Mr. Crotchet to invite him to-day. But the art of assorting company is above these

* ΦΙΛΟΠΟΤΑμος. *Fluviorum amans.*

parvenus. They invite a certain number of persons without considering how they harmonise with each other. Between Sir Simon and you is the Reverend Doctor Folliott. He is said to be an excellent scholar, and is fonder of books than the majority of his cloth; he is very fond, also, of the good things of this world. He is of an admirable temper, and says rude things in a pleasant half-earnest manner, that nobody can take offence with. And next to him, again, is one Captain Fitzchrome, who is very much in love with a certain person that does not mean to have any thing to say to him, because she can better her fortune by taking somebody else.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

And next to him, again, is the beautiful, the accomplished, the witty, the fascinating, the tormenting Lady Clarinda, who traduces herself to the said captain by assertions which it would drive him crazy to believe.

LADY CLARINDA.

Time will show, sir. And now we have gone the round of the table.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

But I must say, though I know you had always a turn for sketching characters, you surprise me by your observation, and especially by your attention to opinions.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, I will tell you a secret: I am writing a novel.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

A novel!

LADY CLARINDA.

Yes, a novel. And I shall get a little finery by it: trinkets and fal-lals, which I cannot get from papa. You must know I have been reading several fashionable novels, the fashionable this, and the fashionable that; and I thought to myself, why I can do better than any of these myself. So I wrote a chapter or two, and sent them as a specimen to Mr. Puffall, the bookseller, telling him they were to be a part of the fashionable something or other, and he offered me, I will not say how much,

to finish it in three volumes, and let him pay all the newspapers for recommending it as the work of a lady of quality, who had made very free with the characters of her acquaintance.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Surely you have not done so ?

LADY CLARINDA.

Oh, no ; I leave that to Mr. Eavesdrop. But Mr. Puffall made it a condition that I should let him say so.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

A strange recommendation.

LADY CLARINDA.

Oh, nothing else will do. And it seems you may give yourself any character you like, and the newspapers will print it as if it came from themselves. I have commended you to three of our friends here, as an economist, a transcendentalist, and a classical scholar ; and if you wish to be renowned through the world for these, or any other accomplishments, the newspapers will confirm you in their possession for half-a-guinea a piece.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Truly, the praise of such gentry must be a feather in any one's cap.

LADY CLARINDA.

So you will see, some morning, that my novel is "the most popular production of the day." This is Mr. Puffall's favourite phrase. He makes the newspapers say it of every thing he publishes. But "the day," you know, is a very convenient phrase ; it allows of three hundred and sixty-five "most popular productions" in a year. And in leap-year one more.

CHAPTER VI.

THEORIES.

But when they came to shape the model,
Not one could fit the other's noddle. — BUTLER.

MEANWHILE, the last¹ course, and the dessert, passed by. When the ladies had withdrawn, young Crotchet addressed the Company.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

There is one point in which philosophers of all classes seem to be agreed; that they only want money to regenerate the world.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No doubt of it. Nothing is so easy as to lay down the outlines of perfect society. There wants nothing but money to set it going. I will explain myself clearly and fully by reading a paper. (*Producing a large scroll.*) "In the infancy of society—"

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Pray, Mr. Mac Quedy, how is it that all gentlemen of your nation begin every thing they write with the "infancy of society?"

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh, sir, it is the simplest way to begin at the beginning. "In the infancy of society, when government was invented to save a percentage; say two and a half per cent.—"

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I will not say any such thing.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, say any percentage you please.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I will not say any percentage at all.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

“On the principle of the division of labour—”

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Government was invented to spend a percentage.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

To save a percentage.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir, to spend a percentage; and a good deal more than two and a half per cent. Two hundred and fifty per cent.; that is intelligible.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

“In the infancy of society”—

MR. TOOGOOD.

Never mind the infancy of society. The question is of society in its maturity. Here is what it should be. (*Producing a paper.*) I have laid it down in a diagram.

MR. SKIONAR.

Before we proceed to the question of government, we must nicely discriminate the boundaries of sense, understanding, and reason. Sense is a receptivity—

MR. CROUCHET, JUN.

We are proceeding too fast. Money being all that is wanted to regenerate society, I will put into the hands of this company a large sum for the purpose. Now let us see how to dispose of it.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

We will begin by taking a committee-room in London, where we will dine together once a week, to deliberate.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

If the money is to go in deliberative dinners, you may set me down for a committee man and honorary caterer.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Next, you must all learn political economy, which I will teach you, very compendiously, in lectures over the bottle.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I hate lectures over the bottle. But pray, sir, what is political economy?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Political economy is to the state what domestic economy is to the family.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No such thing, sir. In the family there is a *paterfamilias*, who regulates the distribution, and takes care that there shall be no such thing in the household as one dying of hunger, while another dies of surfeit. In the state it is all hunger at one end, and all surfeit at the other. Matchless claret, Mr. Crotchet.

MR. CROTCHET.

Vintage of fifteen, doctor.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

The family consumes, and so does the state.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Consumes, sir! Yes: but the mode, the proportions; there is the essential difference between the state and the family. Sir, I hate false analogies.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, the analogy is not essential. Distribution will come under its proper head.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Come where it will, the distribution of the state is in no respect analogous to the distribution of the family. The *paterfamilias*, sir: the *paterfamilias*.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, let that pass. The family consumes, and in order to consume, it must have supply.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, Adam and Eve knew that, when they delved and span.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Very true, sir (*reproducing his scroll*). "In the infancy of society—"

MR. TOOGOOD.

The reverend gentleman has hit the nail on the head. It is the distribution that must be looked to: it is the *paterfamilias* that is wanting in the state. Now here I have provided him. (*Reproducing his diagram.*)

MR. TRILLO.

Apply the money, sir, to building and endowing an opera house, where the ancient altar of Bacchus may flourish, and justice may be done to sublime compositions. (*Producing a part of a manuscript opera.*)

MR. SKIONAR.

No, sir, build *sacella* for transcendental oracles to teach the world how to see through a glass darkly. (*Producing a scroll.*)

MR. TRILLO.

See through an opera-glass brightly.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

See through a wine-glass, full of claret: then you see both darkly and brightly. But, gentlemen, if you are all in the humour for reading papers, I will read you the first half of my next Sunday's sermon. (*Producing a paper.*)

OMNES.

No sermon! No sermon!

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then I move that our respective papers be committed to our respective pockets.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Political economy is divided into two great branches, production and consumption.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Yes, sir; there are two great classes of men: those who produce much and consume little; and those who consume much and produce nothing. The *fruges consumere nati*, have the best of it. Eh, captain! you remember the characteristics of a great man according to Aristophanes: ἵσταις γε πίνειν ὀιδε καὶ βίβειν μόνον. Ha! ha! ha! Well, captain,

even in these tight-laced days, the obscurity of a learned language allows a little pleasantry.

CAPTAIN FITZGERONE.

Very true, sir: the pleasantry and the ohseurity go together: they are all onc, as it were;—to me at any rate. (*aside.*)

MR. MAO QUEDY.

Now, sir—

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Pray, sir, let your science alone, or you will put me under the painful necessity of demolishing it bit by bit, as I have done your exordium. I will undertake it any morning; but it is too hard exercise after dinner.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, in the meantime I hold my science established.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

And I hold it demolished.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Pray, gentlemen, pocket your manuscripts; fill your glasses; and consider what we shall do with our money.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Build lecture rooms and schools for all.

MR. TRILLO.

Revive the Athenian theatre: regenerate the lyrical drama.

MR. TOOGOOD.

Build a grand co-operative parallelogram, with a steam-engine in the middle for a maid of all work.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Drain the country, and get rid of *malaria*, by abolishing duck-ponds.

DR. MORBIFIC.

Found a philanthropic college of anti-contagionists, where all the members shall be inoculated with the virus of all known diseases. Try the experiment on a grand scale.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Build a great dining-hall: endow it with beef and ale, and hang the hall round with arms to defend the provisions.

MR. HENBANE.

Found a toxicological institution for trying all poisons and antidotes. I myself have killed a frog twelve times, and brought him to life eleven; but the twelfth time he died. I have a phial of the drug which killed him in my pocket, and shall not rest till I have discovered its antidote.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I move that the last speaker be dispossessed of his phial, and that it be forthwith thrown into the Thames.

MR. HENBANE.

How, sir? my invaluable, and in the present state of human knowledge, infallible poison?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Let the frogs have all the advantage of it.

MR. CROCHET.

Consider, doctor, the fish might participate. Think of the salmon.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then let the owner's right-hand neighbour swallow it.

MR. EAVESDROP.

Me, sir! What have I done, sir, that I am to be poisoned, sir?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, you have published a character of your facetious friend, the Reverend Doctor F., wherein you have sketched off me; me, sir, even to my nose and wig. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

MR. EAVESDROP.

Sir, it is all good humoured: all in *bonhomie*: all friendly and complimentary.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, the bottle, *la Dive Bouteille*, is a recondite oracle, which makes an Eleusinian temple of the circle in which it moves. He who reveals its mysteries must die. Therefore, let the dose be administered. *Fiat experimentum in animâ vili.*

MR. FAVESDROP.

Sir, you are very facetious at my expense.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, you have been very unfacetious, very inficte at mine. You have dished me up, like a savory omelette, to gratify the appetite of the reading rabble for gossip. The next time, sir, I will respond with the *argumentum baculi-num*. Print that, sir; put it on record as a promise of the Reverend Doctor F., which shall be most faithfully kept, with an exemplary bamboo.

MR. FAVESDROP.

Your cloth protects you, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My bamboo shall protect me, sir.

MR. CROTCHET.

Doctor, doctor, you are growing too polemical.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, my blood boils. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

MR. CROTCHET.

Doctor! Doctor!

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Pray, gentlemen, return to the point. How shall we employ our fund?

MR. PHILPOT.

Surely in no way so beneficially as in exploring rivers. Send a fleet of steam-boats down the Niger, and another up the Nile. So shall you civilise Africa, and establish stocking factories in Abyssinia and Bambo.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

With all submission, breeches and petticoats must precede stockings. Send out a crew of tailors. Try if the king of Bambo will invest inexpressibles.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Gentlemen, it is not for partial, but for general benefit, that this fund is proposed: a grand and universally applicable scheme for the amelioration of the condition of

SEVERAL VOICES.

That is my scheme. I have not heard a scheme but my own that has a grain of common sense.

MR. TRILLO.

Gentlemen, you inspire me. Your last exclamation runs itself into a chorus, and sets itself to music. Allow me to lead, and to hope for your voices in harmony.

After careful meditation,
And profound deliberation,
On the various pretty projects which have just been shown,
Not a scheme in agitation,
For the world's amelioration,
Has a grain of common sense in it, except my own.

SEVERAL VOICES.

We are not disposed to join in any such chorus.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, of all these schemes, I am for Mr. Trillo's. Regenerate the Athenian theatre. My classical friend here, the captain, will vote with me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I, sir? oh! of course, sir.

MR. MAO QUEDY.

Surely, captain, I rely on you to uphold political economy.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Me, sir? oh! to be sure, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Pray, sir, will political economy uphold the Athenian theatre?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Surely not. It would be a very unproductive investment.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then the captain votes against you. What, sir, did not the Athenians, the wisest of nations, appropriate to their theatre their most sacred and intangible fund? Did not they give to melopœia, choregraphy, and the sundry forms of didascalics, the precedence of all other matters, civil and military? Was it not their law, that even the proposal to divert this fund to any other purpose should be punished with death? But, sir, I further propose that the Athenian theatre being resuscitated, the admission shall be free to all who can expound the Greek choruses, constructively, mythologically, and metrically, and to none others. So shall all the world learn Greek: Greek, the Alpha and Omega of all knowledge. At him who sits not in the theatre, shall be pointed the finger of scorn: he shall be called in the highway of the city, "a fellow without Greek."

MR. TRILLO.

But the ladies, sir, the ladies.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Every man may take in a lady: and she who can construct and metricise a chorus, shall, if she so please, pass in by herself.

MR. TRILLO.

But, sir, you will shut me out of my own theatre. Let there at least be a double passport, Greek and Italian.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir; I am inexorable. No Greek, no theatre.

MR. TRILLO.

Sir, I cannot consent to be shut out from my own theatre.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You see how it is, Squire Crotchet the younger; you can scarcely find two to agree on a scheme, and no two of those can agree on the details. Keep your money in your pocket. And so ends the fund for regenerating the world.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, by no means. We are all agreed on deliberative dinners.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true ; we will dine and discuss. We will sing with Robin Hood, " If I drink water while this doth last ;" and while it lasts we will have no adjournment, if not to the Athenian theatre.

MR. TRILLO.

Well, gentlemen, I hope this chorus at least will please you :

If I drink water while this doth last,
May I never again drink wine :
For how can a man, in his life of a span,
Do any thing better than dine ?
We'll dine and drink, and say if we think
That any thing better can be ;
And when we have dined, wish all mankind
May dine as well as we.

And though a good wish will fill no dish,
And brim no cup with sack,
Yet thoughts will spring, as the glasses ring,
To illumine our studious track.
On the brilliant dreams of our hopeful schemes
The light of the flask shall shine ;
And we'll sit till day, but we'll find the way
To drench the world with wine.

The schemes for the world's regeneration evaporated in a tumult of voices.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SLEEPING VENUS.

Quoth he : In all my life till now,
I ne'er saw so profane a show. — BUTLER.

THE library of Crotchet castle was a large and well furnished apartment, opening on one side into an anteroom,

on the other into a music-room. It had several tables stationed at convenient distances ; one consecrated to the novelties of literature, another to the novelties of embellishment ; others unoccupied, and at the disposal of the company. The walls were covered with a copious collection of ancient and modern books ; the ancient having been selected and arranged by the Reverend Doctor Folliott. In the anteroom were card-tables ; in the music-room were various instruments, all popular operas, and all fashionable music. In this suite of apartments, and not in the drawing-room, were the evenings of Crotchets castle usually passed.

The young ladies were in the music-room ; Miss Crotchet at the piano, Lady Clarinda, at the harp, playing and occasionally singing, at the suggestion of Mr. Trillo, portions of *Matilde di Shabran*. Lord Bossnowl was turning over the leaves for Miss Crotchet ; the captain was performing the same office for Lady Clarinda, but with so much more attention to the lady than the book, that he often made sad work with the harmony, by turning over two leaves together. On these occasions Miss Crotchet paused, Lady Clarinda laughed, Mr. Trillo scolded, Lord Bossnowl yawned, the captain apologised, and the performance proceeded.

In the library, Mr. Mac Quedy was expounding political economy to the Reverend Doctor Folliott, who was *pro more* demolishing its doctrines *seriatim*.

Mr. Chainmail was in hot dispute with Mr. Skionar, touching the physical and moral well-being of man. Mr. Skionar was enforcing his friend Mr. Shantsee's views of moral discipline ; maintaining that the sole thing needful for man in this world, was loyal and pious education ; the giving men good books to read, and enough of the hornbook to read them ; with a judicious interspersion of the lessons of Old Restraint, which was his poetic name for the parish stocks. Mr. Chainmail, on the other hand, stood up for the exclusive necessity of beef and ale, lodging and raiment, wife and children, courage to fight for them all, and armour wherewith to do so.

Mr. Henbane had got his face scratched, and his finger

bitten, by the cat, in trying to catch her for a second experiment in killing and bringing to life ; and Doctor Morbific was comforting him with a disquisition, to prove that there were only four animals having the power to communicate hydrophobia, of which the cat was one ; and that it was not necessary that the animal should be in a rabid state, the nature of the wound being every thing, and the idea of contagion a delusion. Mr. Henbane was listening very lugubriously to this dissertation.

Mr. Philpot had seized on Mr. Firedamp, and pinned him down to a map of Africa, on which he was tracing imaginary courses of mighty inland rivers, terminating in lakes and marshes, where they were finally evaporated by the heat of the sun ; and Mr. Firedamp's hair was standing on end at the bare imagination of the mass of *malaria* that must be engendered by the operation. Mr. Toogood had begun explaining his diagrams to Sir Simon Steeltrap ; but Sir Simon grew testy, and told Mr. Toogood that the promulgators of such doctrines ought to be consigned to the treadmill. The philanthropist walked off from the country gentleman, and proceeded to hold forth to young Crotchet, who stood silent, as one who listens, but in reality without hearing a syllable. Mr. Crotchet senior, as the master of the house, was left to entertain himself with his own meditations, till the Reverend Doctor Folliott tore himself from Mr. Mac Quedy, and proceeded to expostulate with Mr. Crotchet on a delicate topic.

There was an Italian painter, who obtained the name of *Il Bragatore*, by the superinduction of inexpressibles on the naked Apollos and Bacchuses of his betters. The fame of this worthy remained one and indivisible, till a set of heads, which had been, by a too common mistake of nature's journeymen, stuck upon magisterial shoulders, as the Corinthian capitals of "fair round bellies with fat capon lined," but which nature herself had intended for the noddles of porcelain mandarins, promulgated simultaneously from the east and the west of London, an order that no plaster-of-Paris Venus should appear in the streets without petticoats. Mr. Crotchet, on reading this order in the evening paper, which, by the postman's early arrival, was always laid on

his breakfast-table, determined to fill his house with Venuses of all sizes and kinds. In pursuance of this resolution, came packages by water-carriage, containing an infinite variety of Venuses. There were the Medicean Venus, and the Bathing Venus; the Uranian Venus, and the Pandemian Venus; the Crouching Venus, and the Sleeping Venus; the Venus rising from the sea, the Venus with the apple of Paris, and the Venus with the armour of Mars.

The Reverend Doctor Folliott had been very much astonished at this unexpected display. Disposed, as he was, to hold, that whatever had been in Greece, was right; he was more than doubtful of the propriety of throwing open the classical *adytum* to the illiterate profane. Whether, in his interior mind, he was at all influenced, either by the consideration that it would be for the credit of his cloth, with some of his vice-suppressing neighbours, to be able to say that he had expostulated; or by curiosity, to try what sort of defence his city-bred friend, who knew the classics only by translations, and whose reason was always a little a-head of his knowledge, would make for his somewhat ostentatious display of liberality in matters of taste; is a question, on which the learned may differ: but, after having duly deliberated on two full-sized casts of the Uranian and Pandemian Venus, in niches on each side of the chimney, and on three alabaster figures, in glass cases, on the mantelpiece, he proceeded, peirastically, to open his fire.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

These little alabaster figures on the mantelpiece, Mr. Crotchet, and those large figures in the niches—may I take the liberty to ask you what they are intended to represent?

MR. CROTCHET.

Venus, sir; nothing more, sir; just Venus.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

May I ask you, sir, why they are there?

MR. CROTCHET.

To be looked at, sir; just to be looked at: the reason

for most things in a gentleman's house being in it at all ; from the paper on the walls, and the drapery of the curtains, even to the books in the library, of which the most essential part is the appearance of the back.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true, sir. As great philosophers hold that the *esse* of things is *percipi*, so a gentleman's furniture exists to be looked at. Nevertheless, sir, there are some things more fit to be looked at than others ; for instance, there is nothing more fit to be looked at than the outside of a book. It is, as I may say, from repeated experience, a pure and unmixed pleasure to have a goodly volume lying before you, and to know that you may open it if you please, and need not open it unless you please. It is a resource against *ennui*, if *ennui* should come upon you. To have the resource and not to feel the *ennui*, to enjoy your bottle in the present, and your book in the indefinite future, is a delightful condition of human existence. There is no place, in which a man can move or sit, in which the outside of a book can be otherwise than an innocent and becoming spectacle. Touching this matter, there cannot, I think, be two opinions. But with respect to your Venuses there can be, and indeed there are, two very distinct opinions. Now, sir, that little figure in the centre of the mantelpiece, — as a grave *paterfamilias*, Mr. Crotchet, with a fair nubile daughter, whose eyes are like the fish-pools of Heshbon, — I would ask you if you hold that figure to be altogether delicate ?

MR. CROTCHET.

The Sleeping Venus, sir ? Nothing can be more delicate than the entire contour of the figure, the flow of the hair on the shoulders and neck, the form of the feet and fingers. It is altogether a most delicate morsel.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Why, in that sense, perhaps, it is as delicate as whitebait in July. But the attitude, sir, the attitude.

MR. CROTCHET.

Nothing can be more natural, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That is the very thing, sir. [It is too natural: too natural, sir: it lies for all the world like —— I make no doubt, the pious cheesemonger, who recently broke its plaster fac-simile over the head of the itinerant vendor, was struck by a certain similitude to the position of his own sleeping beauty, and felt his noble wrath thereby justly aroused.

MR. CROTCHET.

Very likely, sir. In my opinion, the cheesemonger was a fool, and the justice who sided with him was a greater.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Fool, sir, is a harsh term: call not thy brother a fool.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, neither the cheesemonger nor the justice is a brother of mine.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, we are all brethren.

MR. CROTCHET.

Yes, sir, as the hangman is of the thief; the 'squire of the poacher; the judge of the libeller; the lawyer of his client; the statesman of his colleague; the bubble-blower of the bubble-buyer; the slave-driver of the negro: as these are brethren, so am I and the worthies in question.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

To be sure, sir, in these instances, and in many others, the term brother must be taken in its utmost latitude of interpretation: we are all brothers, nevertheless. But to return to the point. Now these two large figures, one with drapery on the lower half of the body, and the other with no drapery at all; upon my word, sir, it matters not what godfathers and godmothers may have promised and vowed for the children of this world, touching the devil and other things to be renounced, if such figures as those are to be put before their eyes.

MR. CROCHET.

Sir, the naked figure is the Pandemian Venus, and the half-draped figure is the Uranian Venus ; and I say, sir, that figure realises the finest imaginings of Plato, and is the personification of the most refined and exalted feeling of which the human mind is susceptible ; the love of pure, ideal, intellectual beauty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I am aware, sir, that Plato, in his Symposium, discourseth very eloquently touching the Uranian and Pandemian Venus : but you must remember that, in our Universities, Plato is held to be little better than a misleader of youth ; and they have shown their contempt for him, not only by never reading him (a mode of contempt in which they deal very largely), but even by never printing a complete edition of him ; although they have printed many ancient books, which nobody suspects to have been ever read on the spot, except by a person attached to the press, who is therefore emphatically called “ the reader.”

MR. CROCHET.

Well, sir ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Why, sir, to “ the reader ” aforesaid (supposing either of our Universities to have printed an edition of Plato), or to any one else who can be supposed to have read Plato, or indeed to be ever likely to do so, I would very willingly show these figures ; because to such they would, I grant you, be the outward and visible signs of poetical and philosophical ideas : but, to the multitude, the gross carnal multitude, they are but two beautiful women, one half undressed, and the other quite so.

MR. CROCHET.

Then, sir, let the multitude look upon them and learn modesty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I must say that, if I wished my footman to learn modesty, I should not dream of sending him to school to a naked Venus.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, ancient sculpture is the true school of modesty. But where the Greeks had modesty, we have cant ; where they had poetry, we have cant ; where they had patriotism, we have cant ; where they had any thing that exalts, delights, or adorns humanity, we have nothing but cant, cant, cant. And, sir, to show my contempt for cant in all its shapes, I have adorned my house with the Greek Venus, in all her shapes, and am ready to fight her battle against all the societies that ever were instituted for the suppression of truth and beauty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My dear sir, I am afraid you are growing warm. Pray be cool. Nothing contributes so much to good digestion as to be perfectly cool after dinner.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, the Lacedæmonian virgins wrestled naked with young men : and they grew up, as the wise Lycurgus had foreseen, into the most modest of women, and the most exemplary of wives and mothers.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very likely, sir ; but the Athenian virgins did no such thing, and they grew up into wives who stayed at home, — stayed at home, sir ; and looked after the husband's dinner, — his dinner, sir, you will please to observe.

MR. CROTCHET.

And what was the consequence of that, sir ? that they were such very insipid persons that the husband would not go home to eat his dinner, but preferred the company of some Aspasia, or Laïs.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Two very different persons, sir, give me leave to remark.

MR. CROTCHET.

Very likely, sir ; but both too good to be married in Athens.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, Lais was a Corinthian.

MR. CROUCHET.

'Od's vengeance, sir, some Aspasia and any other Athenian name of the same sort of person you like ——

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I do not like the sort of person at all: the sort of person I like, as I have already implied, is a modest woman, who stays at home and looks after her husband's dinner.

MR. CROUCHET.

Well, sir, that was not the taste of the Athenians. They preferred the society of women who would not have made any scruple about sitting as models to Praxiteles; as you know, sir, very modest women in Italy did to Canova: one of whom, an Italian countess, being asked by an English lady, "how she could bear it?" answered, "Very well; there was a good fire in the room."

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, the English lady should have asked how the Italian lady's husband could bear it. The phials of my wrath would overflow if poor dear Mrs. Folliott ——: sir, in return for your story, I will tell you a story of my ancestor, Gilbert Folliott. The devil haunted him, as he did Saint Francis, in the likeness of a beautiful damsel; but all he could get from the exemplary Gilbert was an admonition to wear a stomacher and longer petticoats.

MR. CROUCHET.

Sir, your story makes for my side of the question. It proves that the devil, in the likeness of a fair damsel, with short petticoats and no stomacher, was almost too much for Gilbert Folliott. The force of the spell was in the trapezy.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Bless my soul, sir!

MR. CROUCHET.

Give me leave, sir. Diderot——

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Who was he, sir?

MR. CROTCHET.

Who was he, sir? the sublime philosopher, the father of the encyclopædia, of all the encyclopædias that have ever been printed.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Bless me, sir, a terrible progeny! they belong to the tribe of *Incubi*.

MR. CROTCHET.

The great philosopher, Diderot —

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, Diderot is not a man after my heart. Keep to the Greeks, if you please; albeit this Sleeping Venus is not an antique.

MR. CROTCHET.

Well, sir, the Greeks: why do we call the Elgin marbles inestimable? Simply because they are true to nature. And why are they so superior in that point to all modern works, with all our greater knowledge of anatomy? Why sir, but because the Greeks, having no cant, had better opportunities of studying models?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I deny our greater knowledge of anatomy. But I shall take the liberty to employ, on this occasion, the *argumentum ad hominem*. Would you have allowed Miss Crotchet to sit for a model to Canova?

MR. CROTCHET.

Yes, sir.

"God bless my soul, sir!" exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, throwing himself back into a chair, and flinging up his heels, with the premeditated design of giving emphasis to his exclamation: but by miscalculating his *impetus*, he overbalanced his chair, and laid himself on the carpet in a right angle, of which his back was the base.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCIENCE AND CHARITY.

Chi sta nel mondo un par d'ore contento,
Nè gli vien tolta, over contaminata, j
Quella sua pace in veruno momento,
Può dir che Giove drittamente il guata. —FORTEGUERRI.

THE Reverend Doctor Folliott took his departure about ten o'clock, to walk home to his vicarage. There was no moon ; but the night was bright and clear, and afforded him as much light as he needed. He paused a moment by the Roman camp, to listen to the nightingale ; repeated to himself a passage of Sophocles ; proceeded through the park gate, and entered the narrow lane that led to the village. He walked on in a very pleasant mood of the state called *reverie* ; in which fish and wine, Greek and political economy, the Sleeping Venus he had left behind and poor dear Mrs. Folliott, to whose fond arms he was returning, passed as in a *camera obscura* over the tablets of his imagination. Presently the image of Mr. Eavesdrop, with a printed sketch of the Reverend Doctor F., presented itself before him, and he began mechanically to flourish his bamboo. The movement was prompted by his good genius, for the uplifted bamboo received the blow of a ponderous cudgel, which was intended for his head. The reverend gentleman recoiled two or three paces, and saw before him a couple of ruffians, who were preparing to renew the attack, but whom, with two swings of his bamboo, he laid with cracked sconces on the earth, where he proceeded to deal with them like corn beneath the flail of the threshcr. One of them drew a pistol, which went off in the very act of being struck aside by the bamboo, and lodged a bullet in the brain of the other. There was then only one enemy, who vainly struggled to rise, every effort being attended with a new and more signal prostration. The fellow roared for mercy. " Mercy, rascal !" cried the divine ; " what mercy were you going to show me, vil-

lain? What! I warrant me, you thought it would be an easy matter, and no sin, to rob and murder a parson on his way home from dinner. You said to yourself, doubtless, "We'll waylay the fat parson (you irreverent knave) as he waddles home (you disparaging ruffian), half-scas-over (you calumnious vagabond)." And with every dyslogistic term, which he supposed had been applied to himself, he inflicted a new bruise on his rolling and roaring antagonist. "Ah, rogue!" he proceeded; "you can roar now, marauder; you were silent enough when you devoted my brains to dispersion under your cudgel. But seeing that I cannot bind you, and that I intend you not to escape, and that it would be dangerous to let you rise, I will disable you in all your members; I will contund you as *Thestylis* did strong-smelling herbs*, in the quality whereof you do most gravely partake, as my nose beareth testimony, ill weed that you are. I will beat you to a jelly, and I will then roll you into the ditch, to lie till the constable comes for you, thief."

"Hold! hold! reverend sir," exclaimed the penitent culprit, "I am disabled already in every finger, and in every joint. I will roll myself into the ditch, reverend sir."

"Stir not, rascal," returned the divine, "stir not so much as the quietest leaf above you, or my bamboo rebounds on your body like hail in a thunder storm. Confess speedily, villain; are you simple thief, or would you have manufactured me into a subject, for the benefit of science? Ay, miscreant caitiff, you would have made me a subject for science, would you? You are a schoolmaster abroad, are you? You are marching with a detachment of the march of mind, are you? You are a member of the Steam Intellect Society, are you? You swear by the learned friend, do you?"

"Oh, no! reverend sir," answered the criminal, "I am innocent of all these offences, whatever they are, reverend sir. The only friend I had in the world is lying dead beside me, reverend sir."

* *Thestylis*
 herbas contundit olentes.

VIRG. *Ecl.* ii. 10, 11.

The reverend gentleman paused a moment, and leaned on his bamboo. The culprit, bruised as he was, sprang on his legs, and went off in double quick time. The doctor gave him chase, and had nearly brought him within arm's length, when the fellow turned at right angles, and sprang clean over a deep dry ditch. The divine, following with equal ardour, and less dexterity, went down over head and ears into a thicket of nettles. Emerging with much discomposure, he proceeded to the village, and roused the constable; but the constable found, on reaching the scene of action, that the dead man was gone, as well as his living accomplice.

"Oh, the monster!" exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, "he has made a subject for science of the only friend he had in the world." "Ay, my dear," he resumed, the next morning at breakfast, "if my old reading, and my early gymnastics (for as the great Hermann says, before I was demulced by the Muses, I was *ferocis ingenii puer, et ad arma quam ad literas paratior**), had not imbued me indelibly with some of the holy rage of *Frère Jean des Entommeures*, I should be, at this moment, lying on the table of some flinty-hearted anatomist, who would have sliced and disjointed me as unscrupulously as I do these remnants of the capon and chine, wherewith you consoled yourself yesterday for my absence at dinner. Phew! I have a noble thirst upon me, which I will quench with floods of tea."

The reverend gentleman was interrupted by a messenger, who informed him that the Charity Commissioners requested his presence at the inn, where they were holding a sitting.

"The Charity Commissioners!" exclaimed the reverend gentleman, "who on earth are they?"

The messenger could not inform him, and the reverend gentleman took his hat and stick, and proceeded to the inn.

On entering the best parlour, he saw three well-dressed and bulky gentlemen sitting at a table, and a fourth official-

* "A boy of fierce disposition, more inclined to arms than to letters.—HERMANN'S *Dedication of Homer's Hymns to his Preceptor Ilgen*.

ing as clerk, with an open book before him, and a pen in his hand. The churchwardens, who had been also summoned, were already in attendance.

The chief commissioner politely requested the reverend Doctor Folliott to be seated; and after the usual meteorological preliminaries had been settled by a resolution, *nem. con.*, that it was a fine day but very hot, the chief commissioner stated, that in virtue of the commission of Parliament, which they had the honour to hold, they were now to inquire into the state of the public charities of this village.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

The state of the public charities, sir, is exceedingly simple. There are none. The charities here are all private, and so private, that I for one know nothing of them.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

We have been informed, sir, that there is an annual rent charged on the land of Hautbois, for the endowment and repair of an almshouse.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Hautbois ! Hautbois !

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

The manorial farm of Hautbois, now occupied by Farmer Seedling, is charged with the endowment and maintenance of an almshouse.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT (*to the Churchwarden*).

How is this, Mr. Bluenose ?

FIRST CHURCHWARDEN.

I really do not know, sir. What say you, Mr. Appletwig ?

MR. APPLETWIG (*parish-clerk and schoolmaster ; an old man*).

I do remember, gentlemen, to have been informed, that there did stand at the end of the village a ruined cottage, which had once been an almshouse, which was endowed and maintained, by an annual revenue of a mark and a half,

or one pound sterling, charged some centuries ago on the farm of Hautbois ; but the means, by the progress of time, having become inadequate to the end, the almshouse tumbled to pieces.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

But this is a right which cannot be abrogated by desuetude, and the sum of one pound per annum is still chargeable for charitable purposes on the manorial farm of Hautbois.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very well, sir.

MR. APPLETWIG.

But sir, the one pound per annum is still received by the parish, but was long ago, by an unanimous vote in open vestry, given to the minister.

THE THREE COMMISSIONERS (*unâ voce*).

The minister !

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

This is an unjustifiable proceeding.

SECOND COMMISSIONER.

A misappropriation of a public fund.

THIRD COMMISSIONER.

A flagrant perversion of a charitable donation.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT. :

God bless my soul, gentlemen ! I know nothing of this matter. How is this, Mr. Bluenose ? Do I receive this one pound per annum ?

FIRST CHURCHWARDEN.

Really, sir, I know no more about it than you do.

MR. APPLETWIG.

You certainly receive it, sir. It was voted to one of your predecessors. Farmer Seedling lumps it in with his tithes.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

Lumps it in, sir ! Lump in a charitable donation !

SECOND AND THIRD COMMISSIONER.

Oh-oh-oh-h-h !

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

Reverend sir, and gentlemen, officers of this parish, we are under the necessity of admonishing you that this is a most improper proceeding ; and you are hereby duly admonished accordingly. Make a record, Mr. Milky.

MR. MILKY (*writing*).

The clergyman and churchwardens of the village of Him-m-m-m gravely admonished. Him-m-m-m.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Is that all, gentlemen ?

THE COMMISSIONERS.

That is all, sir ; and we wish you a good morning.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

A very good morning to you, gentlemen.

" What in the name of all that is wonderful, Mr. Blue-nose," said the Reverend Doctor Folliott, as he walked out of the inn, " what in the name of all that is wonderful, can those fellows mean ? They have come here in a chaise and four, to make a fuss about a pound per annum, which, after all, they leave as it was. I wonder who pays them for their trouble, and how much."

MR. APPLETWIG.

The public pay for it, sir. It is a job of the learned friend whom you admire so much. It makes away with public money in salaries, and private money in lawsuits, and does no particle of good to any living soul.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Ay, ay, Mr. Appletwig ; that is just the sort of public service to be looked for from the learned friend. Oh, the learned friend ! the learned friend ! He is the evil genius of every thing that falls in his way.

The reverend doctor walked off to Crotchet Castle, to narrate his misadventures, and exhale his budget of grievances on Mr. Mac Quedy, whom he considered a ringleader of the march of mind.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VOYAGE.

Οἱ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἀνακάντες ἐπέπλεον ὑγρά κέλευθα.

Mounting the bark, they cleft the watery ways. — HOMER.

FOUR beautiful cabined pinnaces, one for the ladies, one for the gentlemen, one for kitchen and servants, one for a dining-room and band of music, weighed anchor, on a fine July morning, from below Crotchet Castle, and were towed merrily, by strong trotting horses, against the stream of the Thames. They passed from the district of chalk, successively into the districts of clay, of sand-rock, of oolite, and so forth. Sometimes they dined in their floating dining-room, sometimes in tents, which they pitched on the dry smooth-shaven green of a newly mown meadow; sometimes they left their vessels to see sights in the vicinity; sometimes they passed a day or two in a comfortable inn.

At Oxford, they walked about to see the curiosities of architecture, painted windows, and undisturbed libraries. The Reverend Doctor Folliott laid a wager with Mr. Crotchet "that in all their perustrations they would not find a man reading," and won it. "Ay, sir," said the reverend gentleman, "this is still a seat of learning, on the principle of — once a captain always a captain. We may well ask, in these great reservoirs of books whereof no man ever draws a sluice, *Quorsum pertinuit stipare Platona Menandro?* * What is done here for the classics? Re-printing German editions on better paper. A great boast, verily! What for mathematics? What for metaphysics? What for history? What for any thing worth knowing? This was a seat of learning in the days of Friar Bacon. But the friar is gone, and his learning with him. Nothing of him is left but the immortal nose, which when his brazen head had tumbled to pieces, crying "Time's past," was the only palpable fragment among its minutely pul-

* Wherefore is Plato on Menander piled? — HOR. SAT. II. 3. 11

verised atoms, and which is still resplendent over the portals of its cognominal college. That nose, sir, is the only thing to which I shall take off my hat, in all this Babylon of buried literature.

MR. CROTCHET.

But, doctor, it is something to have a great reservoir of earning, at which some may draw if they please.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

But, here, good care is taken that nobody shall please. If even a small drop from the sacred fountain, *πιδάκος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς*, as Callimachus has it, were carried off by any one, it would be evidence of something to hope for. But the system of dissuasion from all good learning is brought here to a pitch of perfection that baffles the keenest aspirant. I run over to myself the names of the scholars of Germany, a glorious catalogue ! but ask for those of Oxford — Where are they ? The echoes of their courts, as vacant as their heads, will answer, Where are they ? The tree shall be known by its fruit ; and seeing that this great tree, with all its specious seeming, brings forth no fruit, I do denounce it as a barren fig.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I shall set you right on this point. We do nothing without motives. If learning get nothing but honour, and very little of that ; and if the good things of this world, which ought to be the rewards of learning, become the mere gifts of self-interested patronage ; you must not wonder if, in the finishing of education, the science which takes precedence of all others, should be the science of currying favour.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true, sir. Education is well finished, for all worldly purposes, when the head is brought into the state whereinto I am accustomed to bring a marrow-bone, when it has been set before me on a toast, with a white napkin wrapped round it. Nothing trundles along the high road of preferment so trimly as a well-biassed sconce, picked clean within, and polished without ; *totus teres atque ro-*

tundus.* The perfection of the finishing lies in the bias, which keeps it trundling in the given direction. There is good and sufficient reason for the fig being barren, but it is not therefor the less a barren fig.

At Godstow, they gathcred hazel on the grave of Rosamond ; and, proceeding on their voyage, fell into a discussion on legendary histories.

LADY CLARINDA.

History is but a tiresome thing in itself ; it becomes more agreeable the more romance is mixed up with it. The great enchanter has made me learn many things which I should never have dreamed of studying, if they had not come to me in the form of amusement.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

What enchanter is that ? There are two enchanters : he of the North, and he of the South.

MR. TRILLO.

Rossini ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Ay, there is another enchanter. But I mean the great enchanter of Covent Garden : he who, for more than a quarter of a century, has produced two pantomimes a year, to the delight of children of all ages, including myself at all ages. That is the enchanter for me. I am for the pantomimes. All the northern enchanter's romances put together would not furnish materials for half the southern enchanter's pantomimes.

LADY CLARINDA.

Surely you do not class literature with pantomime ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

In these cases I do. They are both one, with a slight difference. The one is the literature of pantomime, the other is the pantomime of literature. There is the same variety of character, the same diversity of story, the same conspicuousness of incident, the same research into costume, the same display of heraldry, falconry, minstrelsy, scenery, monkery, witchery, devilry, robbery, poachery, piracy,

* All smooth and round.

fishery, gipsy-astrology, demonology, architecture, fortification, castrametation, navigation; the same running base of love and battle. The main difference is, that the one set of amusing fictions is told in music and action; the other in all the worst dialects of the English language. As to any sentence worth remembering, any moral or political truth, any thing having a tendency, however remote, to make men wiser or better, to make them think, to make them even think of thinking; they are both precisely alike: *nuspiam, nequaquam, nullibi, nullimodis*.

LADY CLARINDA.

Very amusing, however.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very amusing, very amusing.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

My quarrel with the northern enchanter is, that he has grossly misrepresented the twelfth century.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He has misrepresented every thing, or he would not have been very amusing.* Sober truth is but dull matter to the reading rabble. The angler, who puts not on his hook the bait that best pleases the fish, may sit all day on the bank without catching a gudgeon.*

MR. MAC QUEDY.

But how do you mean that he has misrepresented the twelfth century? By exhibiting some of its knights and ladies in the colours of refinement and virtue, seeing that they were all no better than ruffians, and something else that shall be nameless?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

By no means. By depicting them as much worse than they were, not, as you suppose, much better. No one would infer from his pictures that theirs was a much better state of society than this which we live in.

* Eloquentiæ magister, nisi, tamquam piscator, eam imposuerit hamis escam, uam scierit appetituros esse pisciculos, sine spe prædæ moratur in scopulo.

PETRONIUS ARBITER.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No, nor was it. It was a period of brutality, ignorance, fanaticism, and tyranny ; when the land was covered with castles, and every castle contained a gang of banditti, headed by a titled robber, who levied contributions with fire and sword ; plundering, torturing, ravishing, burying his captives in loathsome dungeons, and broiling them on gridirons, to force from them the surrender of every particle of treasure which he suspected them of possessing ; and fighting every now and then with the neighbouring lords, his conterminal bandits, for the right of marauding on the boundaries. This was the twelfth century, as depicted by all contemporary historians and poets.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, sir. Weigh the evidence of specific facts ; you will find more good than evil. Who was England's greatest hero ; the mirror of chivalry, the pattern of honour, the fountain of generosity, the model to all succeeding ages of military glory ? Richard the First. There is a king of the twelfth century. What was the first step of liberty ? Magna Charta. That was the best thing ever done by lords. There are lords of the twelfth century. You must remember, too, that these lords were petty princes, and made war on each other as legitimately as the heads of larger communities did or do. For their system of revenue, it was, to be sure, more rough and summary than that which has succeeded it, but it was certainly less searching and less productive. And as to the people, I content myself with these great points : that every man was armed, every man was a good archer, every man could and would fight effectively with sword or pike, or even with oaken cudgel : no man would live quietly without beef and ale ; if he had them not, he fought till he either got them, or was put out condition to want them. They were not, and could not be, subjected to that powerful pressure of all the other classes of society, combined by gunpowder, steam, and *fiscality*, which has brought them to that dismal degradation in which we see them now. And there are the people of the twelfth century.

MR. MAO QUEDY.

As to your king, the enchanter has done him ample justice, even in your own view. As to your lords and their ladies, he has drawn them too favourably, given them too many of the false colours of chivalry, thrown too attractive a light on their abominable doings. As to the people, he keeps them so much in the back-ground, that he can hardly be said to have represented them at all, much less misrepresented them, which indeed he could scarcely do, seeing that, by your own showing, they were all thieves, ready to knock down any man for what they could not come by honestly.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, sir. They could come honestly by beef and ale, while they were left to their simple industry. When oppression interfered with them in that, then they stood on the defensive, and fought for what they were not permitted to come by quietly.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

If A, being aggrieved by B, knocks down C, do you call that standing on the defensive?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

That depends on who or what C is.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Gentlemen, you will never settle this controversy, till you have first settled what is good for man in this world; the great question, *de finibus*, which has puzzled all philosophers. If the enchanter has represented the twelfth century too brightly for one, and too darkly for the other of you, I should say, as an impartial man, he has represented it fairly. My quarrel with him is, that his works contain nothing worth quoting; and a book that furnishes no quotations, is, *me judice*, no book — it is a plaything. There is no question about the amusement — amusement of multitudes; but if he who amuses us most, is to be our enchanter *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, then my enchanter is the enchanter of Covent Garden.

CHAPTER X.

THE VOYAGE, CONTINUED.

Continuant nostre route, navigasmes par trois jours *sans rien decouvrir.*
 RABELAIS.

"THERE is a beautiful structure," said Mr. Chainmail, as they glided by Lechlade church ; " a subject for the pencil, Captain. It is a question worth asking, Mr. Mac Quedy, whether the religious spirit which reared these edifices, and connected with them everywhere an asylum for misfortune and a provision for poverty, was not better than the commercial spirit, which has turned all the business of modern life into schemes of profit, and processes of fraud and extortion. I do not see, in all your boasted improvements, any compensation for the religious charity of the twelfth century. I do not see any compensation for that kindly feeling which, within their own little communities, bound the several classes of society together, while full scope was left for the development of natural character, wherein individuals differed as conspicuously as in costume. Now, we all wear one conventional dress, one conventional face ; we have no bond of union, but pecuniary interest ; we talk any thing that comes uppermost, for talking's sake, and without expecting to be believed ; we have no nature, no simplicity, no picturesqueness : every thing about us is as artificial and as complicated as our steam-machinery : our poetry is a kaleidoscope of false imagery, expressing no real feeling, portraying no real existence. I do not see any compensation for the poetry of the twelfth century."

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I wonder to hear you, Mr. Chainmail, talking of the religious charity of a set of lazy monks and beggarly friars, who were much more occupied with taking than giving ; of whom, those who were in earnest did nothing but make themselves, and every body about them, miserable, with fastings, and penances, and other such trash ; and those

who were not, did nothing but guzzle and royster, and, having no wives of their own, took very unbecoming liberties with those of honest men. And as to your poetry of the twelfth century, it is not good for much.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

It has, at any rate, what ours wants, truth to nature, and simplicity of diction. The poetry, which was addressed to the people of the dark ages, pleased in proportion to the truth with which it depicted familiar images, and to their natural connection with the time and place to which they were assigned. In the poetry of our enlightened times, the characteristics of all seasons, soils, and climates, may be blended together, with much benefit to the author's fame as an original genius. The cowslip of a civic poet is always in blossom, his fern is always in full feather; he gathers the celandine, the primrose, the heath-flower, the jasmine, and the chrysanthemum, all on the same day, and from the same spot: his nightingale sings all the year round, his moon is always full, his cygnet is as white as his swan, his cedar is as tremulous as his aspen, and his poplar as embowering as his beech. Thus all nature marches with the march of mind; but, among barbarians, instead of mead and wine, and the best seat by the fire, the reward of such a genius would have been, to be summarily turned out of doors in the snow, to meditate on the difference between day and night, and between December and July. It is an age of liberality, indeed, when not to know an oak from a burdock is no disqualification for sylvan minstrelsy. I am for truth and simplicity.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Let him who loves them read Greek: Greek, Greek, Greek.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

If he can, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true, sir; if he can. Here is the captain, who can. But I think he must have finished his education at some very rigid college, where a quotation, or any other overt act showing acquaintance with classical literature, was

visited with a severe penalty. For my part, I make it my boast that I was not to be so subdued. I could not be abated of a single quotation by all the bumpers in which I was fined.

In this manner they glided over the face of the waters, discussing every thing and settling nothing. Mr. Mac Quedy and the Reverend Doctor Folliott had many digladiations on political economy: wherein, each in his own view, Doctor Folliott demolished Mr. Mac Quedy's science, and Mr. Mac Quedy demolished Doctor Folliott's objections.

We would print these dialogues if we thought any one would read them: but the world is not yet ripe for this *haute sagesse Pantagrueline*. We must, therefore, content ourselves with an *échantillon* of one of the Reverend Doctor's perorations.

"You have given the name of a science to what is yet an imperfect inquiry; and the upshot of your so-called science is this, that you increase the wealth of a nation by increasing in it the quantity of things which are produced by labour: no matter what they are, no matter how produced, no matter how distributed. The greater the quantity of labour that has gone to the production of the quantity of things in a community, the richer is the community. That is your doctrine. Now, I say, if this be so, riches are not the object for a community to aim at. I say, the nation is best off, in relation to other nations, which has the greatest quantity of the common necessities of life distributed among the greatest number of persons; which has the greatest number of honest hearts and stout arms united in a common interest, willing to offend no one, but ready to fight in defence of their own community against all the rest of the world, because they have something in it worth fighting for. The moment you admit that one class of things, without any reference to what they respectively cost, is better worth having than another; that a smaller commercial value, with one mode of distribution, is better than a greater commercial value, with another mode of distribution; the whole of that curious fabric of

postulates and dogmas, which you call the science of political economy, and which I call *politicae æconomicae inscientia*, tumbles to pieces."

Mr. Toogood agreed with Mr. Chainmail against Mr. Mac Quedy, that the existing state of society was worse than that of the twelfth century; but he agreed with Mr. Mac Quedy against Mr. Chainmail, that it was in progress to something much better than either,—to which "something much better" Mr. Toogood and Mr. Mac Quedy attached two very different meanings.

Mr. Chainmail fought with Doctor Folliott, the battle of the romantic against the classical in poetry; and Mr. Skionar contended with Mr. Mac Quedy for intuition and synthesis, against analysis and induction in philosophy.

Mr. Philpot would lie along for hours, listening to the gurgling of the water round the prow, and would occasionally edify the company with speculations on the great changes that would be effected in the world by the steam-navigation of rivers: sketching the course of a steam-boat up and down some mighty stream which civilisation had either never visited, or long since deserted; the Missouri and the Columbia, the Oronoko and the Amazon, the Nile and the Niger, the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Oxus and the Indus, the Ganges and the Hoangho; under the overcanopying forests of the new, or by the long-silent ruins of the ancient world; through the shapeless mounds of Babylon, or the gigantic temples of Thebes.

Mr. Trillo went on with the composition of his opera, and took the opinions of the young ladies on every step in its progress; occasionally regaling the company with specimens, and wondering at the blindness of Mr. Mac Quedy, who could not, or would not, see that an opera in perfection, being the union of all the beautiful arts,—music, painting, dancing, poetry,—exhibiting female beauty in its most attractive aspects, and in its most becoming costume,—was, according to the well-known precept, *Ingenuas didicisse*, &c., the most efficient instrument of civilisation, and ought to take precedence of all other pursuits in the minds of true philanthropists. The Reverend Doctor Folliott, on these occasions, never failed

to say a word or two on Mr. Trillo's side, derived from the practice of the Athenians, and from the combination, in their theatre, of all the beautiful arts, in a degree of perfection unknown to the modern world.

Leaving Lechlade, they entered the canal that connects the Thames with the Severn; ascended by many locks; passed by a tunnel three miles long, through the bowels of Sapperton Hill; agreed unanimously that the greatest pleasure derivable from visiting a cavern of any sort was that of getting out of it; descended by many locks again, through the valley of Stroud into the Severn; continued their navigation into the Ellesmere canal; moored their pinnaces in the Vale of Llangollen by the aqueduct of Pontcysyllty; and determined to pass some days in inspecting the scenery, before commencing their homeward voyage.

The captain omitted no opportunity of pressing his suit on Lady Clarinda, but could never draw from her any reply but the same doctrines of worldly wisdom, delivered in a tone of *badinage*, mixed with a certain kindness of manner that induced him to hope she was not in earnest.

But the morning after they had anchored under the hills of the Dee,—whether the lady had reflected more seriously than usual, or was somewhat less in good humour than usual, or the Captain was more pressing than usual,—she said to him, “It must not be, Captain Fitzchrome; ‘the course of true love never did run smooth:’ my father must keep his borough, and I must have a town house and a country house, and an opera box, and a carriage. It is not well for either of us that we should flirt any longer: ‘I must be cruel only to be kind.’ Be satisfied with the assurance that you alone, of all men, have ever broken my rest. To be sure, it was only for about three nights in all; but that is too much.”

The captain had *le cœur narré*. He took his portfolio under his arm, made up the little *valise* of a pedestrian, and, without saying a word to any one, wandered off at random among the mountains.

After the lapse of a day or two, the captain was missed, and every one marvelled what was become of him. Mr.

Philpot thought he must have been exploring a river, and fallen in and got drowned in the process. Mr. Firedamp had no doubt he had been crossing a mountain bog, and had been suddenly deprived of life by the exhalations of marsh miasmata. Mr. Henbane deemed it probable that he had been tempted in some wood by the large black brilliant berries of the *Atropa Belladonna*, or Deadly Nightshade; and lamented that he had not been by, to administer an infallible antidote. Mr. Eavesdrop hoped the particulars of his fate would be ascertained; and asked if any one present could help him to any authentic anecdotes of their departed friend. The Reverend Doctor Folliott proposed that an inquiry should be instituted as to whether the march of intellect had reached that neighbourhood; as, if so, the captain had probably been made a subject for science. Mr. Mac Quedy said it was no such great matter to ascertain the precise mode in which the surplus population was diminished by one. Mr. Toogood asseverated that there was no such thing as surplus population, and that the land, properly managed, would maintain twenty times its present inhabitants: and hereupon they fell into a disputation.

Lady Clarinda did not doubt that the captain had gone away designedly: she missed him more than she could have anticipated; and wished she had at least postponed her last piece of cruelty till the completion of their homeward voyage.

CHAPTER XI.

CORRESPONDENCE.

“Base is the slave that pays.” — ANCIENT PISTOL.

THE captain was neither drowned nor poisoned, neither miasmatished nor anatomised. But, before we proceed to

account for him, we must look back to a young lady, of whom some little notice was taken in the first chapter ; and who, though she has since been out of sight, has never with us been out of mind ; Miss Susannah Touchandgo, the forsaken of the junior Crotchet, whom we left an inmate of a solitary farm, in one of the deep valleys under the cloudcapt summits of Meirion, comforting her wounded spirit with air and exercise, rustic cheer, music, painting, and poetry, and the prattle of the little Ap Llymrys.

One evening, after an interval of anxious expectation, the farmer, returning from market, brought for her two letters, of which the contents were these : —

*“ Dotundecarryonetown,
State of Apodidraskiana :
April 1. 18 . .*

“ MY DEAR CHILD,

“ I am anxious to learn what are your present position, intention, and prospects. The fairies who dropped gold in your shoe, on the morning when I ceased to be a respectable man in London, will soon find a talismanic channel for transmitting you a stocking full of dollars, which will fit the shoe, as well as the foot of Cinderella fitted her slipper. I am happy to say, I am again become a respectable man. It was always my ambition to be a respectable man ; and I am a very respectable man here, in this new township of a new state, where I have purchased five thousand acres of land, at two dollars an acre, hard cash, and established a very flourishing bank. The notes of Touchandgo and Company, soft cash, are now the exclusive currency of all this vicinity. This is the land in which all men flourish ; but there are three classes of men who flourish especially, — Methodist preachers, slave-drivers, and paper-money manufacturers ; and as one of the latter, I have just painted the word **BANK** on a fine slab of maple, which was green and growing when I arrived, and have discounted for the settlers, in my own currency, sundry bills, which are to be paid when the proceeds of the crop they have just sown shall return from New Orleans ; so that my notes are the representatives of

vegetation that is to be, and I am accordingly a capitalist of the first magnitude. The people here know very well that I ran away from London, but the most of them have run away from some place or other; and they have a great respect for me, because they think I ran away with something worth taking, which few of them had the luck or the wit to do. This gives them confidence in my resources, at the same time that, as there is nothing portable in the settlement except my own notes, they have no fear that I shall run away with them. They know I am thoroughly conversant with the principles of banking; and as they have plenty of industry, no lack of sharpness, and abundance of land, they wanted nothing but capital to organise a flourishing settlement; and this capital I have manufactured to the extent required, at the expense of a small importation of pens, ink, and paper, and two or three inimitable copper plates. I have abundance here of all good things, a good conscience included; for I really cannot see that I have done any wrong. This was my position: I owed half a million of money; and I had a trifle in my pocket. It was clear that this trifle could never find its way to the right owner. The question was, whether I should keep it, and live like a gentleman; or hand it over to lawyers and commissioners of bankruptcy, and die like a dog on a dunghill. If I could have thought that the said lawyers, &c., had a better title to it than myself, I might have hesitated; but, as such title was not apparent to my satisfaction, I decided the question in my own favour; the right owners, as I have already said, being out of the question altogether. I have always taken scientific views of morals and politics, a habit from which I derive much comfort under existing circumstances.

"I hope you adhere to your music, though I cannot hope again to accompany your harp with my flute. My last *andante* movement was too *forte* for those whom it took by surprise. Let not your *allegro vivace* be damped by young Crotchet's desertion, which, though I have not heard it, I take for granted. He is, like myself, a scientific politician, and has an eye as keen as a needle, to his own interest. He has had good luck so far, and is gor-

geous in the spoils of many gulls; but I think the Polar Basin and Walrus-Company will be too much for him yet. There has been a splendid outlay on credit; and he is the only man, of the original parties concerned, of whom his majesty's sheriffs could give any account.

"I will not ask you to come here. There is no husband for you. The men smoke, drink, and fight, and break more of their own heads than of girls' hearts. Those among them who are musical sing nothing but psalms. They are excellent fellows in their way, but you would not like them.

"*Au reste*, here are no rents, no taxes, no poor-rates, no tithes, no church-establishment, no routs, no clubs, no rotten boroughs, no operas, no concerts, no theatres, no beggars, no thieves, no king, no lords, no ladies, and only one gentleman, videlicet, your loving father,

"TIMOTHY TOUCHANDGO.

"P. S. — I send you one of my notes; I can afford to part with it. If you are accused of receiving money from me, you may pay it over to my assignees. Robthetill continues to be my factotum; I say no more of him in this place: he will give you an account of himself."

"*Dotandcarryon town, &c.*

"DEAR MISS,

"Mr. Touchandgo will have told you of our arrival here, of our setting up a bank, and so forth. We came here in a tilted waggon, which served us for parlour, kitchen, and all. We soon got up a log-house; and, unluckily, we as soon got it down again, for the first fire we made in it burned down house and all. However, our second experiment was more fortunate; and we are pretty well lodged in a house of three rooms on a floor; I should say the floor, for there is but one.

"This new state is free to hold slaves; all the new states have not this privilege: Mr. Touchandgo has bought some, and they are building him a villa. Mr. Touchandgo is in a thriving way, but he is not happy here: he longs for parties and concerts, and a seat in congress. He thinks it very hard that he cannot buy one with his own

coinage, as he used to do in England. Besides, he is afraid of the regulators, who, if they do not like a man's character, wait upon him and flog him, doubling the dose at stated intervals, till he takes himself off. He does not like this system of administering justice: though I think he has nothing to fear from it. He has the character of having money, which is the best of all characters here, as at home. He lets his old English prejudices influence his opinions of his new neighbours; but I assure you they have many virtues. Though they do keep slaves, they are all ready to fight for their own liberty; and I should not like to be an enemy within reach of one of their rifles. When I say enemy, I include bailiff in the term. One was shot not long ago. There was a trial; the jury gave two dollars damages; the judge said they must find guilty or not guilty; but the counsel for the defendant (they would not call him prisoner), offered to fight the judge upon the point: and as this was said literally, not metaphorically, and the counsel was a stout fellow, the judge gave in. The two dollars damages were not paid after all; for the defendant challenged the foreman to box for double or quits, and the foreman was beaten. The folks in New York made a great outcry about it, but here it was considered all as it should be. So you see, Miss, justice, liberty, and every thing else of that kind, are different in different places, just as suits the convenience of those who have the sword in their own hands. Hoping to hear of your health and happiness, I remain,

“ Dear Miss, your dutiful servant,
“ RODERICK ROBTHERILL.”

Miss Touchandgo replied as follows, to the first of these letters: —

“ MY DEAR FATHER,

“ I am sure you have the best of hearts, and I have no doubt you have acted with the best intentions. My lover, or I should rather say, my fortune's lover, has indeed forsaken me. I cannot say I did not feel it; indeed, I cried very much; and the altered looks of

people who used to be so delighted to see me, really annoyed me so that I determined to change the scene altogether. I have come into Wales, and am boarding with a farmer and his wife. Their stock of English is very small, but I managed to agree with them; and they have four of the sweetest children I ever saw, to whom I teach all I know, and I manage to pick up some Welsh. I have puzzled out a little song, which I think very pretty; I have translated it into English, and I send it you, with the original air. You shall play it on your flute at eight o'clock every Saturday evening, and I will play and sing it at the same time, and I will fancy that I hear my dear papa accompanying me.

"The people in London said very unkind things of you: they hurt me very much at the time; but now I am out of their way, I do not seem to think their opinion of much consequence. I am sure, when I recollect, at leisure, every thing I have seen and heard among them, I cannot make out what they do that is so virtuous as to set them up for judges of morals. And I am sure they never speak the truth about any thing, and there is no sincerity in either their love or their friendship. An old Welsh bard here, who wears a waistcoat embroidered with leeks, and is called the Green Bard of Cadair Idris, says the Scotch would be the best people in the world if there was nobody but themselves to give them a character; and so, I think, would the Londoners. I hate the very thought of them, for I do believe they would have broken my heart if I had not got out of their way. Now I shall write you another letter very soon, and describe to you the country, and the people, and the children, and how I amuse myself, and every thing that I think you will like to hear about: and when I seal this letter, I shall drop a kiss on the cover.

"Your loving daughter,

"SUSANNAH TOUCHANDGO.

"P. S. — Tell Mr. Robthetill I will write to him in a day or two. This is the little song I spoke of: —

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
My heart is gone, far, far from me;

And ever on its track will flee
My thoughts, my dreams, beyond the sea.

* Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
The swallow wanders fast and free :
Oh, happy bird ! were I like thee,
I, too, would fly beyond the sea.

* Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
Are kindly hearts and social glee :
But here for me they may not be ;
My heart is gone beyond the sea.'

CHAPTER XII.

THE MOUNTAIN INN.

Ὡς ἂν τῷ μισοῦντι τοὺς φαύλους τρόπους
Ἦρμεία.

How sweet to minds that love not sordid ways
Is solitude ! — MENANDER.

THE captain wandered despondingly up and down hill for several days, passing many hours of each in sitting on rocks ; making, almost mechanically, sketches of water-falls, and mountain pools ; taking care, nevertheless, to be always before night-fall in a comfortable inn, where, being a temperate man, he wiled away the evening with making a bottle of sherry into negus. His rambles brought him at length into the interior of Merionethshire, the land of all that is beautiful in nature, and all that is lovely in woman.

Here, in a secluded village, he found a little inn, of small pretension and much comfort. He felt so satisfied with his quarters, and discovered every day so much variety in the scenes of the surrounding mountains, that his inclination to proceed farther diminished progressively.

It is one thing to follow the high road through a country, with every principally remarkable object carefully noted down in a book, taking, as therein directed, a guide, at particular points, to the more recondite sights : it is another to sit down on one chosen spot, especially when the choice is unpremeditated, and from thence, by a series

of explorations, to come day by day on unanticipated scenes. The latter process has many advantages over the former; it is free from the disappointment which attends excited expectation, when imagination has outstripped reality, and from the accidents that mar the scheme of the tourist's single day, when the valleys may be drenched with rain, or the mountains shrouded with mist.

The captain was one morning preparing to sally forth on his usual exploration, when he heard a voice without, inquiring for a guide to the ruined castle. The voice seemed familiar to him, and going forth into the gateway, he recognised Mr. Chainmail. After greetings and inquiries for the absent, "You vanished very abruptly, captain," said Mr. Chainmail, "from our party on the canal."

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

To tell you the truth, I had a particular reason for trying the effect of absence from a part of that party.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I surmised as much: at the same time, the unusual melancholy of an in general most vivacious young lady made me wonder at your having acted so precipitately. The lady's heart is yours, if there be truth in signs.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Hearts are not now what they were in the days of the old song, "Will love be controlled by advice?"

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Very true; hearts, heads, and arms have all degenerated, most sadly. We can no more feel the high impassioned love of the ages, which some people have the impudence to call dark, than we can wield King Richard's battleaxe, bend Robin Hood's bow, or flourish the oaken graff of the Pinder of Wakefield. Still we have our tastes and feelings, though they deserve not the name of passions; and some of us may pluck up spirit to try to carry a point, when we reflect that we have to contend with men no better than ourselves.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

We do not now break lances for ladies.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, nor even bulrushes. We jingle purses for them, flourish paper-money banners, and tilt with scrolls of parchment.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

In which sort of tilting I have been thrown from the saddle. I presume it was not love that led you from the flotilla.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

By no means. I was tempted by the sight of an old tower; not to leave this land of ruined castles, without having collected a few hints for the adornment of my baronial hall.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I understand you live *en famille* with your domestics. You will have more difficulty in finding a lady who would adopt your fashion of living, than one who would prefer you to a richer man.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Very true. I have tried the experiment on several as guests; but once was enough for them: so, I suppose, I shall die a bachelor.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I see, like some others of my friends, you will give up any thing except your hobby.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I will give up anything but my baronial hall.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You will never find a wife for your purpose, unless in the daughter of some old-fashioned farmer.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, I thank you. I must have a lady of gentle blood; I shall not marry below my own condition: I am too much of a herald; I have too much of the twelfth century in me for that.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Why then your chance is not much better than mine.

A well-born beauty would scarcely be better pleased with your baronial hall, than with my more humble offer of love in a cottage. She must have a town-house, and an opera-box, and roll about the streets in a carriage; especially if her father has a rotten borough, for the sake of which he sells his daughter, that he may continue to sell his country. But you were inquiring for a guide to the ruined castle in this vicinity; I know the way, and will conduct you.

The proposal pleased Mr. Chainmail, and they set forth on their expedition.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAKE.—THE RUIN.

Or vieni, Amore, e quà meco t'assetta. — ORLANDO INNAMORATO.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Would it not be a fine thing, captain,—you being picturesque, and I poetical; you being for the lights and shadows of the present, and I for those of the past,—if we were to go together over the ground which was travelled in the twelfth century by Giraldus de Barri, when he accompanied Archbishop Baldwin to preach the crusade?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Nothing, in my present frame of mind, could be more agreeable to me.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

We would provide ourselves with his *Itinerarium*; compare what has been with what is; contemplate in their decay the castles and abbeys which he saw in their strength and splendour; and, while you were sketching their remains, I would dispassionately inquire what has been gained by the change.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Be it so.

But the scheme was no sooner arranged than the captain was summoned to London by a letter on business, which he did not expect to detain him long. Mr. Chainmail, who, like the captain, was fascinated with the inn and the scenery, determined to await his companion's return; and, having furnished him with a list of books, which he was to bring with him from London, took leave of him, and began to pass his days like the heroes of Ariosto, who

—— tutto il giorno, al bel oprar intenti,
Saliron balze, e traversar torrenti.

One day Mr. Chainmail traced upwards the course of a mountain-stream, to a spot where a small waterfall threw itself over a slab of perpendicular rock, which seemed to bar his farther progress. On a nearer view, he discovered a flight of steps, roughly hewn in the rock, on one side of the fall. Ascending these steps, he entered a narrow winding pass, between high and naked rocks, that afforded only space for a rough footpath carved on one side, at some height above the torrent.

The pass opened on a lake, from which the stream issued, and which lay like a dark mirror, set in a gigantic frame of mountain precipices. Fragments of rock lay scattered on the edge of the lake, some half-buried in the water: Mr. Chainmail scrambled some way over these fragments, till the base of a rock, sinking abruptly in the water, effectually barred his progress. He sat down on a large smooth stone; the faint murmur of the stream he had quitted, the occasional flapping of the wings of the heron, and at long intervals the solitary springing of a trout, were the only sounds that came to his ear. The sun shone brightly half-way down the opposite rocks, presenting, on their irregular faces, strong masses of light and shade. Suddenly he heard the dash of a paddle, and, turning his eyes, saw a solitary and beautiful girl gliding over the lake in a coracle; she was proceeding from the vicinity of the point he had quitted towards the upper end of the lake. Her apparel was rustic, but there was in its style

something more *recherché*, in its arrangement something more of elegance and precision, than was common to the mountain peasant girl. It had more of the *contadina* of the opera than of the genuine mountainer; so at least thought Mr. Chainmail; but she passed so rapidly, and took him so much by surprise, that he had little opportunity for accurate observation. He saw her land, at the farther extremity, and disappear among the rocks: he rose from his seat, returned to the mouth of the pass, stepped from stone to stone across the stream, and attempted to pass round by the other side of the lake; but there again the abruptly sinking precipice closed his way.

Day after day he haunted the spot, but never saw again either the damsel or the coracle. At length, marvelling at himself for being so solicitous about the apparition of a peasant girl in a coracle, who could not, by any possibility, be any thing to him, he resumed his explorations in another direction.

One day he wandered to the ruined castle, on the seashore, which was not very distant from his inn; and sitting on the rock, near the base of the ruin, was calling up the forms of past ages on the wall of an ivied tower, when on its summit appeared a female figure, whom he recognised in an instant for his nymph of the coracle. The folds of the blue gown pressed by the sea breeze against one of the most symmetrical of figures, the black feather of the black hat, and the ringleted hair beneath it fluttering in the wind; the apparent peril of her position, on the edge of the mouldering wall, from whose immediate base the rock went down perpendicularly to the sea, presented a singularly interesting combination to the eye of the young antiquary.

Mr. Chainmail had to pass half round the castle, on the land side, before he could reach the entrance: he coasted the dry and bramble-grown moat, crossed the unguarded bridge, passed the unportcullised arch of the gateway, entered the castle court, ascertained the tower, ascended the broken stairs, and stood on the ivied wall. But the nymph of the place was gone. He searched the ruins within and without, but he found not what he sought: he haunted

the castle day after day, as he had done the lake, but the damsel appeared no more.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DINGLE.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her, and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,
Shall pass into her face. — WORDSWORTH.

Miss Susannah Touchandgo had read the four great poets of Italy, and many of the best writers of France. About the time of her father's downfall, accident threw into her way *Les Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire*; and from the impression which these made on her, she carried with her into retirement all the works of Rousseau. In the midst of that startling light which the conduct of old friends on a sudden reverse of fortune throws on a young and inexperienced mind, the doctrines of the philosopher of Geneva struck with double force upon her sympathies: she imbibed the sweet poison, as somebody calls it, of his writings, even to a love of truth; which, every wise man knows, ought to be left to those who can get any thing by it. The society of children, the beauties of nature, the solitude of the mountains, became her consolation, and, by degrees, her delight. The gay society from which she had been excluded remained on her memory only as a disagreeable dream. She imbibed her new monitor's ideas of simplicity of dress, assimilating her own with that of the peasant girls in the neighbourhood; the black hat, the blue gown, the black stockings, the shoes tied on the instep.

Pride was, perhaps, at the bottom of the change; she was willing to impose in some measure on herself, by

marking a contemptuous indifference to the characteristics of the class of society from which she had fallen,

“And with the food of pride sustained her soul
In solitude.”

It is true that she somewhat modified the forms of her rustic dress : to the black hat she added a black feather, to the blue gown she added a tippet, and a waistband fastened in front with a silver buckle ; she wore her black stockings very smooth and tight on her ankles, and tied her shoes in tasteful bows, with the nicest possible ribbon. In this apparel, to which, in winter, she added a scarlet cloak, she made dreadful havoc among the rustic mountaineers, many of whom proposed to “keep company” with her in the Cambrian fashion, an honour which, to their great surprise, she always declined. Among these, Harry Ap-Heather, whose father rented an extensive shecpwalk, and had a thousand she-lambs wandering in the mountains, was the most strenuous in his suit, and the most pathetic in his lamentations for her cruelty.

Miss Susannah often wandered among the mountains alone, even to some distance from the farm-house. Sometimes she descended into the bottom of the dingles, to the black rocky beds of the torrents, and dreamed away hours at the feet of the cataracts. One spot in particular, from which she had at first shrunk with terror, became by degrees her favourite haunt. A path turning and returning at acute angles, led down a steep wood-covered slope to the edge of a chasm, where a pool, or resting-place of a torrent, lay far below. A cataract fell in a single sheet into the pool ; the pool boiled and bubbled at the base of the fall, but through the greater part of its extent lay calm, deep, and black, as if the cataract had plunged through it to an unimaginable depth without disturbing its eternal repose. At the opposite extremity of the pool, the rocks almost met at their summits, the trees of the opposite banks intermingled their leaves, and another cataract plunged from the pool into a chasm on which the sunbeams never gleamed. High above, on both sides, the steep woody slopes of the dingle soared into the sky ; and from a fissure in the rock, on which the little path ter-

minated, a single gnarled and twisted oak stretched itself over the pool, forming a fork with its boughs at a short distance from the rock. Miss Susannah often sat on the rock, with her feet resting on this tree: in time, she made her seat on the tree itself, with her feet hanging over the abyss; and at length she accustomed herself to lie along upon its trunk, with her side on the mossy holl of the fork, and an arm round one of the ranches. From this position a portion of the sky and the woods was reflected in the pool, which, from its bank, was but a mass of darkness. The first time she reclined in this manner, her heart beat audibly; in time, she lay down as calmly as on the mountain heather: the perception of the sublime was probably heightened by an intermingled sense of danger; and perhaps that indifference to life, which early disappointment forces upon sensitive minds, was necessary to the first experiment. There was, in the novelty and strangeness of the position, an excitement which never wholly passed away, but which became gradually subordinate to the influence, at once tranquillising and elevating, of the mingled eternity of motion, sound, and solitude.

One sultry noon, she descended into this retreat with a mind more than usually disturbed by reflections on the past. She lay in her favourite position, sometimes gazing on the cataract; looking sometimes up the steep sylvan acclivities into the narrow space of the cloudless ether; sometimes down into the abyss of the pool, and the deep bright-blue reflections that opened another immensity below her. The distressing recollections of the morning, the world, and all its littlenesses, faded from her thoughts like a dream; but her wounded and wearied spirit drank in too deeply the tranquillising power of the place, and she dropped asleep upon the tree like a ship-boy on the mast.

At this moment Mr. Chainmail emerged into daylight, on a projection of the opposite rock, having struck down through the woods in search of unsophisticated scenery. The scene he discovered filled him with delight: he seated himself on the rock, and fell into one of his romantic reveries; when suddenly the semblance of a black hat and feather caught his eye among the foliage of the projecting

oak. He started up, shifted his position, and got a glimpse of a blue gown. It was his lady of the lake, his enchantress of the ruined castle, divided from him by a barrier, which, at a few yards below, he could almost overleap, yet unapproachable but by a circuit perhaps of many hours. He watched with intense anxiety. To listen if she breathed was out of the question : the noses of a dean and chapter would have been soundless in the roar of the torrent. From her extreme stillness, she appeared to sleep : yet what creature, not desperate, would go wilfully to sleep in such a place ? Was she asleep then ? Nay, was she alive ? She was as motionless as death. Had she been murdered, thrown from above, and caught in the tree ? She lay too regularly and too composedly for such a supposition. She was asleep then, and in all probability her waking would be fatal. He shifted his position. Below the pool two beetle-browed rocks nearly overarched the chasm, leaving just such a space at the summit as was within the possibility of a leap ; the torrent roared below in a fearful gulf. He paused some time on the brink, measuring the practicability and the danger, and casting every now and then an anxious glance to his sleeping beauty. In one of these glances he saw a slight movement of the blue gown, and, in a moment after, the black hat and feather dropped into the pool. Reflection was lost for a moment, and, by a sudden impulse, he bounded over the chasm.

He stood above the projecting oak ; the unknown beauty lay like the nymph of the scene ; her long black hair, which the fall of her hat had disengaged from its fastenings, drooping through the boughs : he saw that the first thing to be done was to prevent her throwing her feet off the trunk, in the first movements of waking. He sat down on the rock, and placed his feet on the stem, securing her ankles between his own : one of her arms was round a branch of the fork, the other lay loosely on her side. The hand of this arm he endeavoured to reach, by leaning forward from his seat ; he approximated, but could not touch it : after several tantalising efforts, he gave up the point in despair. He did not attempt to wake her, because he feared it might have bad consequences, and he resigned

himself to expect the moment of her natural waking, determined not to stir from his post, if she should sleep till midnight.

In this period of forced inaction, he could contemplate at leisure the features and form of his charmer. She was not one of the slender beauties of romance ; she was as plump as a partridge ; her cheeks were two roses, not absolutely damask, yet verging thereupon ; her lips twin-cherries, of equal size ; her nose regular, and almost Grecian ; her forehead high, and delicately fair ; her eyebrows symmetrically arched ; her eyelashes long, black, and silky, fitly corresponding with the beautiful tresses that hung among the leaves of the oak, like clusters of wandering grapes.* Her eyes were yet to be seen ; but how could he doubt that their opening would be the rising of the sun, when all that surrounded their fringy portals was radiant as “ the forehead of the morning sky ? ”

CHAPTER XV.

THE FARM.

Da ydyw'r gwaith, rhaid d'we'yd y gwir,
Ar fryniau Sir Meiriony.
Golwg oer o'r gwacla gawn
Mae hi etto y llawn llawenydd.

Though Merion's rocks, and hills of heath
Repel the distant sight ;
Yet where, 'tween those bleak hills beneath,
Is found more true delight ?

At length the young lady awoke. She was startled at the sudden sight of the stranger, and somewhat terrified at the first perception of her position. But she soon recovered her self-possession, and, extending her hand to the offered hand of Mr. Chainmail, she raised herself up on the tree, and stepped on the rocky bank.

* ' Ἀλήμονα βότρυν ἰδοίρας.—NONNUS.

Mr. Chainmail solicited permission to attend her to her home, which the young lady graciously conceded. They emerged from the woody dingle, traversed an open heath, wound along a mountain road by the shore of a lake, descended to the deep bed of another stream, crossed it by a series of stepping stones, ascended to some height on the opposite side, and followed upwards the line of the stream, till the banks opened into a spacious amphitheatre, where stood, in its fields and meadows, the farm-house of Ap-Llymry.

During this walk, they had kept up a pretty animated conversation. The lady had lost her hat; and, as she turned towards Mr. Chainmail, in speaking to him, there was no envious projection of brim to intercept the beams of those radiant eyes he had been so anxious to see unclosed. There was in them a mixture of softness and brilliancy, the perfection of the beauty of female eyes, such as some men have passed through life without seeing, and such as no man ever saw, in any pair of eyes, but once; such as can never be seen and forgotten. Young Crotchet had seen it; he had not forgotten it; but he had trampled on its memory, as the renegade tramples on the emblems of a faith which his interest only, and not his heart or his reason, has rejected.

Her hair streamed over her shoulders; the loss of the black feather had left nothing but the rustic costume, the blue gown, the black stockings, and the ribbon-tied shoes. Her voice had that full soft volume of melody which gives to common speech the fascination of music. Mr. Chainmail could not reconcile the dress of the damsel with her conversation and manners. He threw out a remote question or two, with the hope of solving the riddle; but, receiving no reply, he became satisfied that she was not disposed to be communicative respecting herself, and, fearing to offend her, fell upon other topics. They talked of the scenes of the mountains, of the dingle, the ruined castle, the solitary lake. She told him that lake lay under the mountains behind her home, and the coracle and the pass at the extremity saved a long circuit to the nearest village, whither she sometimes went to inquire for letters.

Mr. Chainmail felt curious to know from whom these letters might be; and he again threw out two or three fishing questions, to which, as before, he obtained no answer.

The only living biped they met in their walk was the unfortunate Harry Ap-Heather, with whom they fell in by the stepping-stones, who, seeing the girl of his heart hanging on another man's arm, and, concluding at once that they were "keeping company," fixed on her a mingled look of surprise, reproach, and tribulation; and, unable to control his feelings under the sudden shock, burst into a flood of tears, and blubbered till the rocks re-echoed.

They left him mingling his tears with the stream, and his lamentations with its murmurs. Mr. Chainmail inquired who that strange creature might be, and what was the matter with him. The young lady answered, that he was a very worthy young man, to whom she had been the innocent cause of much unhappiness.

"I pity him sincerely," said Mr. Chainmail; and, nevertheless, he could scarcely restrain his laughter at the exceedingly original figure which the unfortunate rustic lover had presented by the stepping-stones.

The children ran out to meet their dear Miss Susan, jumped all round her, and asked what was become of her hat. Ap-Llynry came out in great haste, and invited Mr. Chainmail to walk in and dine: Mr. Chainmail did not wait to be asked twice. In a few minutes the whole party, Miss Susan and Mr. Chainmail, Mr. and Mrs. Ap-Llynry, and progeny, were seated over a clean homespun tablecloth, ornamented with fowls and bacon, a pyramid of potatoes, another of cabbage, which Ap-Llynry said "was poiled with the pacon, and as coot as marrow," a bowl of milk for the children, and an immense brown jug of foaming ale, with which Ap-Llynry seemed to delight in filling the horn of his new guest.

Shall we describe the spacious apartment, which was at once kitchen, hall, and dining-room, — the large dark rafters, the pendent bacon and onions, the strong old oaken furniture, the bright and trimly arranged utensils? Shall we describe the cut of Ap-Llynry's coat, the colour

and tie of his neckcloth, the number of buttons at his knees, — the structure of Mrs. Ap-Llymry's cap, having lappets over the ears, which were united under the chin, setting forth especially whether the bond of union were a pin or a ribbon? We shall leave this tempting field of interesting expatiation to those whose brains are high-pressure steam engines for spinning prose by the furlong, to be trumpeted in paid-for paragraphs in the quack's corner of newspapers: modern literature having attained the honourable distinction of sharing with blacking and macassar oil, the space which used to be monopolized by razor-strops and the lottery, whereby that very enlightened community, the reading public, is tricked into the perusal of much exemplary nonsense; though the few who see through the trickery have no reason to complain, since as "good wine needs no bush," so, *ex vi oppositi*, these bushes of venal panegyric point out very clearly that the things they celebrate are not worth reading.

The party dined very comfortably in a corner most remote from the fire; and Mr. Chainmail very soon found his head swimming with two or three horns of ale, of a potency to which even he was unaccustomed. After dinner, Ap-Llymry made him finish a bottle of mead, which he willingly accepted, both as an excuse to remain, and as a drink of the dark ages, which he had no doubt was a genuine brewage, from uncorrupted tradition.

In the meantime, as soon as the cloth was removed, the children had brought out Miss Susannah's harp. She began, without affectation, to play and sing to the children, as was her custom of an afternoon, first in their own language, and their national melodies, then in English; but she was soon interrupted by a general call of little voices for "Ouf! di giorno." She complied with the request, and sang the ballad from Paër's *Camilla*: *Un dì carco il mulinaro*.* The children were very familiar with every

* In this ballad, the terrors of the Black Forest are narrated to an assemblage of domestics and peasants, who, at the end of every stanza, dance in a circle round the narrator. The second stanza is as follows:

Una notte in un stradotto
Un incauto s'inoltrò;
E uno strillo udì di botto
Che l'orecchio gl'intronò: —

syllable of this ballad, which had been often fully explained to them. They danced in a circle with the burden of every verse, shouting out the chorus with good articulation and joyous energy; and at the end of the second stanza, where the traveller has his nose pinched by his grandmother's ghost, every nose in the party was nipped by a pair of little fingers. Mr. Chainmail, who was not prepared for the process, came in for a very energetic twcak, from a chubby girl that sprang suddenly on his knees for the purpose, and made the roof ring with her laughter.

So passed the time till evening, when Mr. Chainmail moved to depart. But it turned out on inquiry that he was some miles from his inn, that the way was intricate, and that he must not make any difficulty about accepting the farmer's hospitality till morning. The evening set in with rain: the fire was found agreeable; they drew around it. The young lady made tea; and afterwards, from time to time, at Mr. Chainmail's special request, delighted his ear with passages of ancient music. Then came a supper of lake trout, fried on the spot, and thrown, smoking-hot, from the pan to the plate. Then came a brewage, which the farmer called his nightcap, of which he insisted on Mr. Chainmail's taking his full share. After which the gentleman remembered nothing, till he awoke, the next morning, to the pleasant consciousness that he was under the same roof with one of the most fascinating creatures under the canopy of heaven.

Era l'ombra di sua nonna,
 Che pel naso lo pigliò.
 Ouf! di giorno nè di sera,
 Non passiam la selva nera. — (*Ballano in Giro.*)

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEWSPAPER.

Ποῖας δ' ἀποσπασθεῖσα φύτλας
 Ὀρίων κυθμῶνας ἔχει σκιόιντων;

Sprung from what line, adorns the maid
 These valleys deep in mountain shade? — PIND. *Pyth.* IX.

MR. CHAINMAIL forgot the captain and the route of Giraldus de Barri. He became suddenly satisfied that the ruined castle in his present neighbourhood was the best possible specimen of its class, and that it was needless to carry his researches further.

He visited the farm daily: found himself always welcome; flattered himself that the young lady saw him with pleasure, and dragged a heavier chain at every new parting from Miss Susan, as the children called his nymph of the mountains. What might be her second name, he had vainly endeavoured to discover.

Mr. Chainmail was in love; but the determination he had long before formed and fixed in his mind, to marry only a lady of gentle blood, without a blot on her escutcheon, repressed the declarations of passion which were often rising to his lips. In the meantime, he left no means untried, to pluck out the heart of her mystery.

The young lady soon divined his passion, and penetrated his prejudices. She began to look on him with favourable eyes; but she feared her name and parentage would present an insuperable barrier to his feudal pride.

Things were in this state when the captain returned, and unpacked his maps and books in the parlour of the inn.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Really, captain, I find so many objects of attraction in this neighbourhood, that I would gladly postpone our purpose.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Undoubtedly, this neighbourhood has many attractions;

but there is something very inviting in the scheme you laid down.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No doubt, there is something very tempting in the route of Giraldus de Barri. But there are better things in this vicinity even than that. To tell you the truth, captain, I have fallen in love.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

What ! while I have been away ?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Even so.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

The plunge must have been very sudden, if you are already over head and ears.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

As deep as Llyn-y-dreiddiad-vrawd.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

And what may that be ?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

A pool not far off : a resting-place of a mountain stream, which is said to have no bottom. There is a tradition connected with it ; and here is a ballad on it, at your service : —

LLYN-Y-DREIDDIAD-VRAWD.

THE POOL OF THE DIVING FRIAR.

GWENWYNWYN withdrew from the feasts of his hall ;
He slept very little, he prayed not at all ;
He pondered, and wandered, and studied alone ;
And sought, night and day, the philosopher's stone.

He found it at length, and he made its first proof
By turning to gold all the lead of his roof :
Then he bought some magnanimous heroes, all fire,
Who lived but to smite and be smitten for hire.

With these, on the plains like a torrent he broke ;
He filled the whole country with flame and with smoke ;
He killed all the swine, and he broached all the wine ;
He drove off the sheep, and the beeves, and the kine ;

He took castles and towns ; he cut short limbs and lives ;
He rode orphans and widows of children and wives :
This course many years he triumphantly ran,
And did mischief enough to be called a great man.

When, at last, he had gained all for which he had striven,
 He bethought him of buying a passport to heaven ;
 Good and great as he was, yet he did not well know
 How soon, or which way, his great spirit might go.

He sought the grey friars, who, beside a wild stream,
 Refected their frames on a primitive scheme ;
 The gravest and wisest Gwenwynwyn found out,
 All lonely and ghostly, and anghing for trout.

Below the white dash of a mighty cascade,
 Where a pool of the stream a deep resting-place made,
 And rock-rooted oaks stretched their branches on high,
 The friar stood musing, and throwing his fly.

To him said Gwenwynwyn, " Hold, father, here's store,
 For the good of the church, and the good of the poor ;"
 Then he gave him the stone ; but, ere more he could speak,
 Wrath came on the friar, so holy and meek :

He had stretched forth his hand to receive the red gold,
 And he thought himself mocked by Gwenwynwyn the Bold ;
 And in scorn of the gift, and in rage at the giver,
 He jerked it immediately into the river.

Gwenwynwyn, aghast, not a syllable spake ;
 The philosopher's stone made a duck and a drake :
 Two systems of circles a moment were seen,
 And the stream smoothed them off, as they never had been.

Gwenwynwyn regained, and uplifted, his voice :
 " Oh friar, grey friar, full rash was thy choice ;
 The stone, the good stone, which away thou hast thrown,
 Was the stone of all stones, the philosopher's stone !"

The friar looked pale, when his error he knew ;
 The friar looked red, and the friar looked blue ;
 And heels over head, from the point of a rock,
 He plunged, without stopping to pull off his frock.

He dived very deep, but he dived all in vain,
 The prize he had slighted he found not again :
 Many times did the friar his diving renew,
 And deeper and deeper the river still grew.

Gwenwynwyn gazed long, of his senses in doubt,
 To see the grey friar a diver so stout :
 Then sadly and slowly his castle he sought,
 And left the friar diving, like dabchick distraught.

Gwenwynwyn fell sick with alarm and despite,
 Died, and went to the devil, the very same night :
 The magnanimous heroes he held in his pay
 Sacked his castle, and marched with the plunder away.

No knell on the silence of midnight was rolled,
 For the flight of the soul of Gwenwynwyn the Bold :
 The brethren, unfeared, let the mighty ghost pass,
 Without praying a prayer, or intoning a mass.

The friar haunted ever beside the dark stream ;
 The philosopher's stone was his thought and his dream :
 And day after day, ever head under heels
 He dived all the time he could spare from his meals.

He dived, and he dived, to the end of his days,
 As the peasants oft witnessed with fear and amaze :
 The mad friar's diving-place long was their theme,
 And no plummet can fathom that pool of the stream.

And still, when light clouds on the midnight winds ride,
 If by moonlight you stray on the lone river-side,
 The ghost of the friar may be seen diving there,
 With head in the water, and heels in the air.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Well, your ballad is very pleasant: you shall show me the scene, and I will sketch it; but just now I am more interested about your love. What heroine of the twelfth century has risen from the ruins of the old castle, and looked down on you from the ivied battlements?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

You are nearer the mark than you suppose. Even from those battlements a heroine of the twelfth century has looked down on me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Oh! some vision of an ideal beauty. I suppose the whole will end in another tradition and a ballad.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Genuine flesh and blood; as genuine as Lady Clarinda. I will tell you the story.

Mr. Chainmail narrated his adventures.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Then you seem to have found what you wished. Chance has thrown in your way what none of the gods would have ventured to promise you.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Yes, but I know nothing of her birth and parentage. She tells me nothing of herself, and I have no right to question her directly.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

She appears to be expressly destined for the light of your baronial hall. Introduce me: in this case, two heads are better than one.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, I thank you. Leave me to manage my chance of a prize, and keep you to your own chance of a——

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Blank. As you please. Well, I will pitch my tent here, till I have filled my portfolio, and shall be glad of as much of your company as you can spare from more attractive society.

Matters went on pretty smoothly for several days, when an unlucky newspaper threw all into confusion. Mr. Chainmail received newspapers by the post, which came in three times a week. One morning, over their half-finished breakfast, the captain had read half a newspaper very complacently, when suddenly he started up in a frenzy, hurled over the breakfast table, and, bouncing from the apartment, knocked down Harry Ap-Heather, who was coming in at the door to challenge his supposed rival to a boxing-match.

Harry sprang up, in a double rage, and intercepted Mr. Chainmail's pursuit of the captain, placing himself in the doorway, in a pugilistic attitude. Mr. Chainmail, not being disposed for this mode of combat, stepped back into the parlour, took the poker in his right hand, and displacing the loose bottom of a large elbow chair, threw it over his left arm, as a shield. Harry, not liking the aspect of the enemy in this imposing attitude, retreated with backward steps into the kitchen, and tumbled over a eur, which immediately fastened on his rear.

Mr. Chainmail, half-laughing, half-vexed, anxious to overtake the captain, and curious to know what was the matter with him, pocketed the newspaper, and sallied forth, leaving Harry roaring for a doctor and a tailor, to repair the lacerations of his outward man.

Mr. Chainmail could find no trace of the captain. Indeed, he sought him but in one direction, which was that leading to the farm ; where he arrived in due time, and found Miss Susan alone. He laid the newspaper on the table, as was his custom, and proceeded to converse with the young lady : a conversation of many pauses, as much of signs as of words. The young lady took up the paper, and turned it over and over, while she listened to Mr. Chainmail, whom she found every day more and more agreeable, when, suddenly, her eye glanced on something which made her change colour, and dropping the paper on the ground, she rose from her seat, exclaiming, " Miserable must she be who trusts any of your faithless sex ! Never, never, never, will I endure such misery twice." And she vanished up the stairs. Mr. Chainmail

was petrified. At length, he cried aloud, "Cornelius Agrippa must have laid a spell on this accursed newspaper;" and was turning it over, to look for the source of the mischief, when Mrs. Ap-Llymry made her appear-

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

What have you done to poor dear Miss Susan? She is crying, ready to break her heart.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

So help me the memory of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, I have not the most distant notion of what is the matter!

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

Oh, don't tell me, sir; you must have ill-used her. I know how it is. You have been keeping company with her, as if you wanted to marry her; and now, all at once, you have been trying to make her your mistress. I have seen such tricks more than once, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

My dear madam, you wrong me utterly. I have none but the kindest feelings and the most honourable purposes towards her. She has been disturbed by something she has seen in this rascally paper.

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

Why, then, the best thing you can do is to go away, and come again to-morrow.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Not I, indeed, madam. Out of this house I stir not, till I have seen the young lady, and obtained a full explanation.

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

I will tell Miss Susan what you say. Perhaps she will come down.

Mr. Chainmail sate with as much patience as he could command, running over the paper, from column to column. At length, he lighted on an announcement of the approaching marriage of Lady Clarinda Bossnowl with Mr. Crotch-

the younger. This explained the captain's discomposure, but the cause of Miss Susan's was still to be sought; he could not know that it was one and the same.

Presently the sound of the longed-for step was heard on the stairs; the young lady reappeared, and resumed her seat: her eyes showed that she had been weeping. The gentleman was now exceedingly puzzled how to begin, but the young lady relieved him by asking, with great simplicity, "What do you wish to have explained, sir?"

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I wish, if I may be permitted, to explain myself to you. Yet could I first wish to know what it was that disturbed you in this unlucky paper. Happy should I be if I could remove the cause of your inquietude!

MISS SUSANNAH.

The cause is already removed. I saw something that excited painful recollections; nothing that I could now wish otherwise than as it is.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Yet, may I ask why it is that I find one so accomplished living in this obscurity, and passing only by the name of Miss Susan?

MISS SUSANNAH.

The world and my name are not friends. I have left the world, and wish to remain for ever a stranger to all whom I once knew in it.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

You can have done nothing to dishonour your name.

MISS SUSANNAH.

No, sir. My father has done that of which the world disapproves, in matters of which I pretend not to judge. I have suffered for it as I will never suffer again. My name is my own secret; I have no other, and that is one not worth knowing. You see what I am, and all I am. I live according to the condition of my present fortune; and here, so living, I have found tranquillity.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Yet, I entreat you, tell me your name.

MISS SUSANNAH.

Why, sir ?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Why, but to throw my hand, my heart, my fortune, at your feet, if ——

MISS SUSANNAH.

If my name be worthy of them.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Nay, nay, not so ; if your hand and heart are free.

MISS SUSANNAH.

My hand and heart are free ; but they must be sought from myself, and not from my name.

She fixed her eyes on him, with a mingled expression of mistrust, of kindness, and of fixed resolution, which the far-gone *innamorato* found irresistible.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Then from yourself alone I seek them.

MISS SUSANNAH.

Reflect. You have prejudices on the score of parentage. I have not conversed with you so often, without knowing what they are. Choose between them and me. I too have my own prejudices on the score of personal pride.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I would choose you from all the world, were you even the daughter of the *exécuteur des hautes œuvres*, as the heroine of a romantic story I once read turned out to be.

MISS SUSANNAH.

I am satisfied. You have now a right to know my history ; and, if you repent, I absolve you from all obligations.

She told him her history ; but he was out of the reach of repentance. " It is true," as at a subsequent period he said to the captain, " she is the daughter of a money-changer ; one who, in the days of Richard the First, would have been plucked by the beard in the streets ; but

she is, according to modern notions, a lady of gentle blood. As to her father's running away, that is a minor consideration: I have always understood, from Mr. Mac Quedy, who is a great oracle in this way, that promises to pay ought not to be kept; the essence of a safe and economical currency being an interminable series of broken promises. There seems to be a difference among the learned as to the way in which the promises ought to be broken; but I am not deep enough in their casuistry to enter into such nice distinctions."

In a few days there was a wedding, a pathetic leave-taking of the farmer's family, a hundred kisses from the bride to the children, and promises twenty times reclaimed and renewed, to visit them in the ensuing year.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE INVITATION.

A cup of wine, that's brisk and fine,
And drink unto the leman mine.

Master Silence.

THIS veridicious history began in May, and the occurrences already narrated have carried it on to the middle of autumn. Stepping over the interval to Christmas, we find ourselves in our first locality, among the chalk hills of the Thames; and we discover our old friend, Mr. Crotchet, in the act of accepting an invitation, for himself, and any friends who might be with him, to pass their Christmas-day at Chain-mail Hall, after the fashion of the twelfth century. Mr. Crotchet had assembled about him, for his own Christmas-festivities, nearly the same party which was introduced to the reader in the spring. Three of that party were wanting. Dr. Morbific, by inoculating himself once too often with non-contagious matter, had explained himself out of the world. Mr. Henbane had also departed, on the wings of an infallible antidote. Mr. Eavesdrop, having printed

in a magazine some of the after-dinner conversations of the castle, had had sentence of exclusion passed upon him, on the motion of the Reverend Doctor Folliott, as a flagitious violator of the confidences of private life.

Miss Crotchet had become Lady Bossnowl, but Lady Clarinda had not yet changed her name to Crotchet. She had, on one pretence and another, procrastinated the happy event, and the gentleman had not been very pressing; she had, however, accompanied her brother and sister-in-law, to pass Christmas at Crotchet Castle. With these, Mr. Mac Quedy, Mr. Philpot, Mr. Trillo, Mr. Skionar, Mr. Too-good, and Mr. Firedamp, were sitting at breakfast, when the Reverend Doctor Folliott entered and took his seat at the table.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, Mr. Mac Quedy, it is now some weeks since we have met: how goes on the march of mind?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, sir; I think you may see that with your own eyes.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I have seen it, much my discomfiture. It has marched into my rick-yard, and set my stacks on fire, with chemical materials, most scientifically compounded. It has marched up to the door of my vicarage, a hundred and fifty strong; ordered my to surrender half me tithes; consumed all the provisions I had provided for my audit feast, and drunk up my old October. It has marched in through my back-parlour shutters, and out again with my silver spoons, in the dead of the night. The policeman, who was sent down to examine, says my house has been broken open on the most scientific principles. All this comes of education.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I rather think it comes of poverty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir. Robbery perhaps comes of poverty; but scientific principles of robbery come of education. I suppose

the learned friend has written a sixpenny treatise on mechanics, and the rascals who robbed me have been reading it.

MR. CROTCHET.

Your house would have been very safe, doctor, if they had had no better science than the learned friend's to work with.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, that may be. Excellent potted char. The Lord deliver me from the learned friend.

MR. CROTCHET.

Well, doctor, for your comfort, here is a declaration of the learned friend's that he will never take office.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then, sir, he will be in office next week. Peace be with him ! Sugar and cream.

MR. CROTCHET.

But, doctor, are you for Chainmail Hall on Christmas-day ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That am I, for there will be an excellent dinner, though, peradventure, grotesquely served.

MR. CROTCHET.

I have not seen my neighbour since he left us on the canal.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He has married a wife, and brought her home.

LADY CLARINDA.

Indeed ! If she suits him, she must be an oddity : it will be amusing to see them together.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

Very amusing. He ! he !

MR. FIREDAMP.

Is there any water about Chainmail Hall ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

An old moat.

MR. FIREDAMP.

I shall die of *malaria*.

MR. TRILLO.

Shall we have any music ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

An old harper.

MR. TRILLO.

Those fellows are always horridly out of tune. What will he play ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Old songs and marches.

MR. SKIONAR.

Amongst so many old things, I hope we shall find Old Philosophy.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

An old woman.

MR. PHILPOT.

Perhaps an old map of the river in the twelfth century.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No doubt.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

How many more old things ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Old hospitality, old wine, old ale — all the images of old England ; an old butler.

MR. TOOGOOD.

Shall we all be welcome ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Heartily ; you will be slapped on the shoulder, and called old boy.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

I think we should all go in our old clothes. He ! he !

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You will sit on old chairs, round an old table, by the light of old lamps, suspended from pointed arches, which